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## THE VICTOR VANQUISHED

EMANCIPATION IN ST. CROIX; ITS ANTECEDENTS AND IMMEDIATE  
AFTERMATH

### INTRODUCTION

The slave uprising of 2–3 July 1848 in St. Croix, Danish West Indies, belongs to that splendidly isolated category of Caribbean slave revolts which succeeded if, that is, one defines success in the narrow sense of the legal termination of servitude. The sequence of events can be briefly rehearsed. On the night of Sunday 2 July, signal fires were lit on the estates of western St. Croix, estate bells began to ring and conch shells blown, and by Monday morning, 3 July, some 8000 slaves had converged in front of Frederiksted fort demanding their freedom. In the early hours of Monday morning, the governor general Peter von Scholten, who had only hours before returned from a visit to neighbouring St. Thomas, summoned a meeting of his senior advisers in Christiansted (Bass End), the island's capital. Among them was Lt. Capt. Irminger, commander of the Danish West Indian naval station, who urged the use of force, including bombardment from the sea to disperse the insurgents, and the deployment of a detachment of soldiers and marines from his frigate *Ørnen*. Von Scholten kept his own counsels. No troops were despatched along the arterial Centreline road and, although he gave Irminger permission to sail around the coast to beleaguered Frederiksted (West End), he went overland himself and arrived in town sometime around 4 p.m. before Irminger did. No sooner had he alighted from his coach than he addressed the swarming multitude of slaves insisting on their freedom: "Now you are free, you are hereby emancipated". (Von Petersen 1855: 94–142; Larsen 1928: 252–67; Lawaetz 1940: 174–91; Vibæk 1966: 286–96; Hansen 1970: 355–96).

Emancipation by gubernatorial fiat abruptly terminated 16 hours of riotous but surprisingly bloodless activity. The absence of bloodshed and the *dénouement* of freedom distinguishes this uprising from other "late" slave rebellions in the Caribbean. Bussa's 1816 rebellion in Barbados, the Demerara uprising in 1823 and the Jamaica Christmas rebellion of 1831 were all characterised by spectacular blood-letting and no immediate consequential change in the slaves' legal status. (Craton 1982: 254-321). None of those uprisings in the British West Indies had been predicated on the declared, as distinct from the rumoured, intent of the metropolitan government to emancipate the slave population. The slaves in the Danish West Indies, on the other hand, had had the crown's assurance in the previous year that general emancipation would take place in 1859, with an interim dispensation of Free Birth to take effect from 28 July 1847. (R/A, GTK, NEER 1847). Nevertheless, the St. Croix rebellion shares common ground with those abovementioned in the British West Indies, in that it derived as much from aroused expectations as it did from a perception of oppression.

The uprising followed more than a decade and a half of ameliorative changes introduced under the liberalizing stewardship of Von Scholten, governor general since 1828. During the 1830s, the work day's length was strictly regulated; slave owners' discretionary powers of punishment drastically reduced; public auctions banned and the keeping of plantation journals for regular inspection made mandatory. (R/A, GTK, CANS 1834-1843: *passim*). In the 1840s, Saturday was conceded as a free day, to facilitate its use as a market day in place of Sunday, which was now consecrated to religious observance and secular instruction, Wage payments at the rate of 4 Reales per day were introduced for plantation work undertaken on the prescribed free day. (Ørsted 1844: 259-61). Significant improvements were also registered in the quality of slave housing which was approvingly viewed by an eye as critical as Victor Schoelcher's (Schoelcher 1843: 20-21). The first publicly supported elementary schools for slave children were opened with appropriate ceremony in 1841, and by 1846 their existence had been formalized by an ordinance authorizing 17 schools distributed between St. Croix, St. Thomas and St. Jan,

the establishment of a board, a curriculum, examination procedures etc. (Hall 1979: 1-45). Von Scholten's strategy was based on a calculation of the inevitability of emancipation in the Danish, once emancipation had taken place in the British, West Indies. Since he deemed it no longer a question of whether but when, he sought by this reforming dispensation to smooth the transition to full freedom when it should arrive (R/A, GTK, CANS 1834-1843: 1834a; 1834b). His metropolitan principals and the increasingly vocal Liberal politicians in Denmark's provincial assemblies gradually came to share the governor general's emancipationist perspective (Jensen 1931-1934: 608-611) and by 1847 the issue had been sealed by royal proclamation.

For all the world therefore, the Danish West Indies appeared set on a course for an untraumatic termination of chattel slavery. Amelioration and the royal proclamation apart, there were other favourable auguries which suggested a smooth passage. There was no well developed tradition of slave revolts. The Danish West Indies, unlike Jamaica, had passed but once through the fiery crucible of actual revolt, and that 1733 uprising in St. Jan (Westergaard 1917) had been conclusively put down with assistance from the French. Ethnic rebellions of the sort which frequently plagued Jamaica, Barbados, the Leeward and Windward islands while their slave populations were predominately African, were never a feature of the Danish West Indian experience. As for conspiracies, only that in St. Croix in 1759 (R/A, GTK 1760; Westergaard 1926) created a briefly sustained ripple of anxiety. Nor were there to be further conspiracies, actual or attempted revolts, as the slave populations of the Danish West Indies became increasingly creolized after the late eighteenth century. In St. Croix itself, a useful index of the creolization process was the astonishingly high incidence of church affiliation, which by 1835 was 99 per cent of the island's total slave population (Hall 1980a: 25). Yet those confessional affinities appear, if anything, to have reinforced the quest for "respectability" at the expense of "reputation" (Wilson 1973). That emphasis, and its concomitant, an accommodating rather than an adversary mind-set, is perhaps best explained not so much by religion's opiate effect, as by the structures within those denominations permitted to practise in the

Danish West Indies: the state Lutheran Church, the Roman Catholics, the Moravians, and to a lesser extent the Dutch Reformed Church. None of these offered the same possibilities as the non-conformist Baptists and Methodists for slave leadership within the congregation; nor, by the same token, the possibilities for the emergence of movements such as the "native Baptists" with their potential for political radicalisation (Turner 1982).

Notwithstanding the apparent order and calm of mature creolized slave society in the Danish West Indies, there were persons, as late as 1847, who recognized that the will to resist was as constant as servitude itself; that the grace period — virtually apprenticeship before emancipation — could conceivably be interrupted by what was euphemistically called "unforeseen circumstances" (Hall 1983b: 52). The slaves for their part had responded to the Law of Free Birth not with unalloyed enthusiasm as might have been anticipated, but rather with impatience born of dissatisfaction that their children were beneficiaries of an imperial largesse which they would have to wait more than a decade to enjoy (Hall 1979: 33). Free Birth as policy had respectable international pedigree: the Venezuelans had implemented it in 1821 (Lombardi 1971: 48–53); Buxton had canvassed it in the British Parliament in 1823 (Klingberg 1968: 182). But in the Danish West Indies, the asymmetry which it established was productive of the very tensions the metropolitan government sought to avoid.

There is evidence, moreover, which indicates that since at least 1800, the slaves particularly in St. Croix, were less and less in thrall to whiteness as a megalithic instrument of social control. Its erosion as a formidable deterrent had been promoted by intimate contact with a growing cadre of Anglo-Irish plantation supervisory personnel which did not exactly command respect. Nor were there grounds to be in awe of a colonial polity whose power traditionally had been less than hegemonic. Most particularly, its exiguous resources of force, which had virtually invited the 1733 uprising, encouraged the conspiracy of 1759 and had proved risibly inadequate to respond to the British invasions of 1801 and 1807, were no more prepossessing in 1848 than they had ever been (Hall 1983b). Whatever other calculations the slaves might have

made in 1848, there is very little doubt that they considered the odds favourable because of the feebleness of the colonial military posture.

Emancipation by gubernatorial fiat foreclosed the possibility of the Akan-style alternative polity envisaged by some earlier Caribbean slave rebellions, and of which the regime of Dessalines, as Michael Craton has perceptively noted, was the ultimate expression (Craton 1982: 251). The St. Croix insurgents had no such political order in contemplation. Their aspirations, like those of their Jamaican counterparts in 1831 or Barbadian equivalents in 1816 (Craton 1982: 252, 257, 294, 332) did not transcend the regularisation of a proto-peasant status well established by 1848 (Hall 1980a; 1983a). Victory achieved through the mediation of state approval also left intact, with the exception of legal slavery, the institutional structures of the colonial polity, including the mechanisms for the administration of law and order. Many of the predominantly non-Danish planter class and some sectors of officialdom, moreover, shared little of Von Scholten's reforming enthusiasm or racial optimism, however guarded (Hall 1979: 15-22). Soured by an emancipation which they thought premature, angered by a rebellion which they deemed impertinent, they sought an early opportunity to restore the social order which had prevailed up to Monday 3 July 1948.

#### THE COURT MARTIAL: PROVENANCE, SIGNIFICANCE AND PURPOSE

In the early hours of Tuesday morning, a group of the recently emancipated was shot down just outside Christiansted. There was retaliatory looting and destruction for the next three days on estates in the centre, south, west and north of the island. On Thursday, Von Scholten suffered what would now be diagnosed as a nervous collapse, and the lieutenant governor of St. Thomas, Frederik Oxholm was invited to assume command of the civil government (Von Petersen 1855: 94-142; Larsen 1928: 252-67; Lawaetz 1940: 174-91; Vibæk 1966: 286-96; Hansen 1970: 355-96). Oxholm arrived on Saturday and the 530 troops which he requested of the governor of Puerto Rico arrived on Friday

(N/A, RG 55 Box 9, 1848a, 1848b). But long before then, Irmingier had moved decisively to assert the power of constituted authority, to demonstrate to the newly emancipated that freedom was not licence. On Tuesday, Frederiksted was put under a state of emergency by a commission consisting of Irmingier, Capt. Frederik von Scholten, the governor general's brother, Capt. Castonier, the fort commandant, and Chief of Police Øgaard: if the freedmen came back to town and assembled in groups of more than ten, they would be fired on by the fort cannon and the frigate, still at anchor in the harbour (von Petersen 1855: 126–27).

Irmingier's role as *primus inter pares* in this commission can be assumed from the superiority of his rank and the fact that he commanded resources far superior to anything Castonier had at his disposal. By Wednesday he had manifestly taken charge, relieving Castonier, albeit temporarily, of the command of the fort, and using his marines to demolish a block of buildings obscuring the fort's line of fire towards the landward approaches from the north and east. By Thursday 6 July, the commission had been enlarged to include the commanding officer of Frederiksted's Fire Corps, Major Gyllich, and Crown Prosecutor Sarauw (Von Petersen 1855: 126–27). This enlarged commission issued a second proclamation on Thursday which had the effect of extending the emergency beyond Frederiksted: "any person or persons opposing the authorities or in any other manner combining for illegal or violent purposes will be dealt with as rioters and instantly shot" (Von Petersen 1855: 129).<sup>2</sup> The mass arrests began the same day and the court martial proceedings in Frederiksted on Friday 7 July.

The court sat uninterruptedly for the next five weeks. It examined more than 100 prisoners, heard evidence from other recently emancipated slaves, from freedmen before emancipation, from estate owners, agents, overseers, book-keepers and from government officials. Those apprehended were far more than could be accommodated in the very fort to which most of the terrified whites of western St. Croix had fled only a few days before. The overflow were confined on the Ørnen and on cargo boats in harbour (Hansen 1970: 394). The court consisted essentially of the members of the commission mentioned above, with

High Court Assessor Louis Rothe as chairman. Irminger did not participate, but the draconian spirit of the trials breathed his love of discipline and strong measures as the only effective method to deal with the perpetrators of the uprising and participants in its destructive aftermath. Within a week, eight persons had been executed on charges ranging from felonious wounding and arson to riotous assembly.

In resorting to the Court Martial, Irminger and the commission drew upon an instrument with the best antecedents. In the previous century a parallel had been drawn with frequency and facility between the slave society of the Danish West Indies and one in which Martial Law or the Articles of War were in force. The population disparity between slaves and whites fostered a desire for absolute obedience and a state-of-siege mentality which manifested themselves in actual or proposed provisions of the Slave Codes and the manner of their administration (Hall 1977). Summary justice of the drumhead variety followed in the wake of the 1759 conspiracy (R/A, GTK 1760) and there were resonances of approval from eighteenth century commentators such as Hans West (West 1793: 134) and a governor general in the 1780s, Major General Schimmelmann (R/A, GTK 1785a).

Above all, however, the elaboration and justification of the military parallel was the work of State Counsellor Lindemann, who produced in 1783 one of the better known draft slave codes. More than a quarter of those 43 articles dealing with "Slaves and Punishment for Misdeeds" had their inclusion justified on the basis of similar provisions in the military code (R/A, GTK 1783a). Proposed punishments for theft and perjury were similarly based, as were proposals for the maintenance of law and order (R/A, GTK 1783b). In those paragraphs dealing with unlawful and riotous assembly aimed at rebellion, Lindemann provided the most explicit bases for the Court Martial of 1848. With Danish War Articles 600 and 601 to guide him, Lindemann proposed that punishment should be terrifying and as summarily swift as a military court. Experience had shown, he said, that slave cases were not only costly but time consuming, and as a result the significance of the punishment was lost by the time it came to be administered. To obviate protracted hearings, Lindemann called



for the use of military process, specifically the "Stand Ret" or Court Martial (R/A, G Tk 1783c).

Riotous assembly on the part of slaves aimed at rebellion, had thus been deemed mutiny as far back as 1783. Little did Lindemann realise that his prescriptions would come to apply where the "mutiny" had "succeeded". Those were the paradoxical foundations on which free society was established in St. Croix. The victors were made to suffer the fate of the vanquished. But this was the heavy price required of those who dared to turn the wheel but not full circle. That price was inherent in a strategy of revolution which eschewed violence and had objectives of too limited a character to disturb the balance of power relations. Free society's partruition in such inauspicious circumstances boded ill for its healthy growth. The cataclysmic eruption of the "Great Fire Burn" in St. Croix 30 years later can only be fully understood in the light of the unresolved tensions of 1848 (Skrubbeltrang 1967: 189-218; Marsh 1981: 78-91).

At another level of significance, the Court Martial through its depositions,<sup>3</sup> provides the only source from which the revolted slaves of 1848 speak. For comparable trials conducted during the slave period the reliability of the evidence, invariably given under duress, must always be treated with a certain caution. In the instant case, however, the fact that those on trial were freedmen, of however recent vintage, is an important distinction lending weight to a presumption of greater reliability. Moreover, in its totality, the evidence, from ex-slave as well as other deponents, has a degree of internal consistency which puts its plausibility beyond reasonable doubt. The trial transcript is thus an important source of information. *Inter alia*, it sheds light on the modalities of planning and mobilisation; the leadership role of individuals; the objectives of the planned revolt; collective expectations and attitudes; the particular role of women, now, no less than before, somewhat more than silent bystanders in Afro-Caribbean resistance to oppression.<sup>4</sup> It demonstrates the rage and passion with which the freedmen settled old scores, and provides from the inventory of destruction brief glimpses of the life-style of plantation whites and the internal appointments of their houses.

The officers of the Court, for their part, were motivated by a

range of concerns somewhat narrower than those which might preoccupy subsequent historians. Apart from the dispensation of exemplary punishments, the purpose of the Court Martial from their perspective was twofold: to enquire into the origins of the emancipation movement and to determine the extent of, participation in, and culpability for the disturbances between Tuesday and Thursday. Naturally, they led evidence to establish foreknowledge, preparation, motive, timing and leadership; and, attempting to anticipate the thrust of the eventual metropolitan enquiry (Lawaetz 1940: 192-216) to probe the connection, if any, between the governor general and those who planned it.<sup>5</sup> Reading through the transcript, the distinct impression prevails that the members of the Court merely went through the motions in the interrogations relating to the post-emancipation disorders. One senses them springing to life, alert and more attentive in the heat and tedium of those long tropical summer days, when there was evidence bearing on the emancipation movement, even though involvement in it could not be deemed an offence after 3 July.

#### THE TRIAL EVIDENCE: PROLOGOMENON TO REVOLT

As was the case with so many previous slave uprisings in the Caribbean, that in St. Croix derived some of its inspiration from rumour, garbled intelligence and misplaced belief in the imminence of emancipation. A great many of the freedmen examined confessed to having heard months before that emancipation was impending. Such talk of emancipation, it appears, gathered momentum after the provisional government of the Second Republic had decreed general emancipation in the French islands in April 1848. This was the tenor of the depositions respectively of Cuby from Envy and Jack from Prosperity (R/A, VLA 1848: 132, 167-68). Johannes from Bog of Allen said that at least since June he had heard slaves out in the country say:

it was their understanding that the King had already for some time past granted freedom to people here, but that this emancipation had not been publicised because the planters opposed it (R/A, VLA 1848: 140).<sup>6</sup>

This view, that emancipation had already been granted, reoccurs in the examination of Frederik from Mt. Pleasant. Chamberlain Ferral's recollection was that when the emancipation proclamation was read on that estate on Tuesday 4 July, Frederik had remarked that if the proclamation had not been printed that day, "it had stuck in their throats for a very long time". Frederik denied the remark, but conceded having said that the proclamation was printed neither on Monday nor on Tuesday. This was a view shared by many slaves in Frederiksted on Monday. According to Frederik they claimed that they had been free for a long time but that the proclamation had been withheld (R/A, VLA 1848: 176, 178-79). If Moses from Butler's Bay is to be believed, at least one white person felt similarly, namely a Mrs. Beech whom he alleged to have heard berating her husband on Tuesday for being a party to withholding the promulgation (R/A, VLA 1848: 158). None of these deponents, however, admitted to knowing anything about the planned march on Frederiksted before Sunday night.

There were others who had heard from a week before that Monday was the target day on which they would withdraw their labour and demand their freedom (R/A, VLA 1848: 177). A slave, George Francis, was alleged to have told the Rosehill workforce on Saturday to turn out with sugar bills and sticks on Monday, but nothing was said about going to Frederiksted. Similar advice had also been given at Rosehill by Richard from neighbouring Mt. Stewart, and Patrick from Punch, another northside estate. Adam from Rosehill admitted, before being sentenced for setting fire to a canefield, that a week in advance Gotlieb Bordeaux, also known as General Buddoe, an artisan from La Grange, had told him they should all "look to their time" and to inform others (R/A, VLA 1848: 39). But Buddoe himself denied knowing anything about the planned events of Monday before Sunday afternoon. Indeed, Buddoe claimed that his source of information was Charles of Butler's Bay. But the latter denied that allegation, insisting he knew nothing prior to Sunday evening (R/A, VLA 1848: 32, 204-205). Martin King, whom the Court said was commonly believed to be a leader of the emancipation movement, also denied any foreknowledge of a plan before Sunday evening. If

he is to be believed, he did not fancy its chances of success even as late as Monday morning (R/A, VLA 1848: 111).

As it transpired none of the persons examined admitted knowledge of a plan earlier than the preceding Friday. On that day, Moses of Butler's Bay said he heard slaves on the way to and from the West End saying there would be no work on Monday. Even so, he knew nothing of a concrete development before he heard the conch shells, known in local creole as *tuttue* (Schmidt 1788: 204), being blown on Sunday night (R/A, VLA 1848: 140). There was even one witness who claimed to have heard nothing before Monday at lunch time (R/A, VLA 1848: 171). It is also interesting to notice that not even those freedmen from Martin King's Bog of Allen or Buddoe's La Grange seemed to have, or admitted to having, any previous information as to what was to transpire. One witness from Bog of Allen told the Court that when the bells started to ring and the shells were being blown on Sunday evening, neither he nor anyone else on the estate, so far as he knew, had any idea of what was afoot. Joseph from Prosperity, who lived on neighbouring La Grange, said he knew nothing before Sunday evening (R/A, VLA 1848: 122, 132).

Counsels of discretion aside, this suggests that the plan had been conceived and passed on to a few chosen persons whose task was to organise their individual estates, and to sound the signals on Sunday night. Limiting knowledge of the plot to a few trusted lieutenants explains the success with which disciplined secrecy was maintained to such a remarkable degree in the planning of the uprising. Further, it enabled its implementation to enjoy all of the optimal advantages of surprise. There were no betrayers in a total slave population of nearly 20000. The compact size, favourable terrain and intense development of St. Croix, where no estate was ever much more than a kilometer from its neighbour, facilitated ease of communication between the leadership without the need to rely on intermediaries of questionable trustworthiness.

### *Leadership*

Whilst the evidence led at the trial is not especially forthcoming with details of prior planning, it positively identifies leadership roles and suggests the identity of ultimate leadership. Specific

individuals either unilaterally assumed, or, more plausibly, were delegated specific tasks for the occupation of Frederiksted. On Monday morning when the crowd there was in front of the office of the Chief of Police, a building which was subsequently destroyed, Augustus from Concordia was self-confessedly "in command to get the crowd in line". His leadership role was emphasised by the sword he had in hand, and by way of further emphasis, the blood of a duck, killed by the same sword, smeared on the front of his shirt (R/A, VLA 1848: 21-22). On Monday evening, still in his bloodstained shirt, he was at Hogensborg estate shouting that he had orders "to decapitate anyone who didn't declare himself free since all were now free". One man for whom the notion of general emancipation was too much to accept, told Augustus he was not free since he had not been manumitted by his master. Augustus promised to decapitate him too. His role as leader is also confirmed by his participation on Monday in a symbolic act of climactic catharsis: the rooting up of the beating post, the *Justits Støt*, in Frederiksted's market square and its dumping into the sea (R/A, VLA 1848: 22, 24).

The first shred of evidence relating to ultimate leadership came from Will of Annally estate. Questioned about his activities in Frederiksted on Monday, he admitted being there and having in his possession a demi-john of rum stolen from the premises of the grocer Moore. But the demi-john was "taken from him or rather smashed". He did not say by whom (R/A, VLA 1848: 110). However, Frederik von Scholten in his eye witness account published subsequently, pointed out that the crowd in front of the fort and adjacent to Moore's grocery, was being commanded by Buddoe. He forcibly prevented the looting of goods and spirits and "smashed the containers with his sword" (Von Petersen 1855: 110). Will either suffered a genuine bout of amnesia, or like so many other witnesses would give nothing away regarding preparation or leadership. One other shred of evidence on leadership came from Edward of Rosehill estate. He told the Court that when George Francis enjoined the workforce on Saturday to turn out on Monday, he made it sound as though Moses of Butler's Bay was the "chief organiser" (R/A, VLA 1848: 178).

Despite intensive interrogation, neither Buddoe nor Martin

King admitted to organising the uprising. Such an admission in any case, with emancipation accomplished, would have been a work of supererogation. However, there was a direct attribution of leadership to Buddoe and Martin King from the four men condemned to death on 11 July: Decatur from Bethlehem for rioting and theft; Friday from Castle for a similar offence; Augustus from Concordia for felonious wounding and Adam from Rosehill for arson. In his original examination on 9 July, Friday deposed that Martin King was to be blamed for everything. On the day he was sentenced, Friday first admitted to using the general's name, i.e. Buddoe, not the governor general, to stir up the crowd, but later came back at his own request to inform the court that "Bordeaux was at the head of everything" (R/A, VLA 1848: 20, 28, 35, 41).

Decatur, who admitted breaking open Moore's iron safe from which a lot of money had been removed, also asked to make a statement to the Court after his death sentence had been pronounced. As far as the Court could make out, he explained that it was Buddoe who made the slaves on northside estates rise for freedom and come into town (R/A, VLA 1848: 38, 39). Adam too, asking the Court to make a statement after his condemnation, reaffirmed his earlier testimony that Buddoe had instructed slaves that they should take their freedom by fair means or foul. Augustus for his part reinforced these statements by adding that on Sunday Buddoe had told slaves that come Monday, they should "tell the white man they would no longer be slaves" (R/A, VLA 1848: 41, 42).

What is of further interest about this group of testimonies, is that with the exception of Friday, they all stated in the most emphatic terms that Buddoe gave no orders for looting or destruction. Friday claimed that Buddoe gave him instructions on Tuesday to destroy Carlton estate (R/A, VLA 1848: 41). But there was an abundance of countervailing evidence from other ex-slaves, from white plantation help and government officials that Buddoe strove to maintain order on Monday and on the days following (R/A, VLA 1848: 61, 62, 89, 120).<sup>7</sup> Friday's statement about Tuesday, even if true, does not alter the weight of the evidence from the other three in relation to Monday. One would have good grounds to believe that Decatur, Augustus and Adam,

their minds wonderfully clarified by the prospect of impending execution, were unlikely to have given collectively misleading testimony. There was nothing to be gained by exonerating Buddoe from instigating violence on Monday. If that part of their testimony stands the test of reliability, so should the other portion relating to Buddoe's ultimate leadership.

### *Strategy and Objectives*

If the proceedings help to clarify the locus of leadership, they also shed some light on organisational strategies. None of the testimony is explicit on this point, but there were enough statements at the trial to indicate that the slaves intended to use the strike weapon as a lever to force the issue of their freedom. Industrial action as a form of ultimate protest was no novelty among Caribbean slave populations. It had been advocated, though unsuccessfully, by Nanny Grigg in Barbados in 1816, Deacon Quamina in Demerara in 1823 and more recently by Sam Sharpe in the Jamaica Christmas uprising of 1831 (Craton 1982: 261, 281, 300). The predetermined signal for Monday's strike was the blowing of *tuttues* and the ringing of plantation bells. Both signalled emergencies such as fire, or work-start and stoppage. But when the signals were given, Frederik von Scholten, whose house lay high enough for a good view of the countryside, could see no fire (von Petersen 1855: 94, 96). At that time of night, work could not, obviously, be beginning. This was indeed an emergency signal, but for a final work-stoppage.

The most concrete testimony of the connection between withdrawal of labour and its use as a bargaining counter for freedom, came from the condemned Augustus. Buddoe, according to him, had told slaves on Sunday that they were not to go to work on Monday *and* to tell the whites they would no longer be slaves. The connection was also made explicit by Edward of Rosehill. Where the connection was not explicit, others nevertheless showed awareness of an impending strike. Moses from Butler's Bay, as mentioned earlier, had heard about this on Friday, and Robert Lucas, the carpenter at Betty's Hope, said that when he went to town on Saturday to buy turpentine, "several persons" had informed him that there was to be no work on Monday (R/A, VLA 1848: 42, 177-78, 140, 157, 94).

The seriousness with which the work-stoppage was enforced is well illustrated by Martin King's experience on Monday. By his own account, the work force at Bog of Allen had gone to work on Monday, a circumstance which raises questions about his leadership influence up to this point. On instructions from the overseer, Williams Naest, King took the plantation wain to drive to the West End. Having descended the escarpment to the Centreline as far as St. George's, where his wife Severine lived (R/A, VLA 1848: 123), Martin King stopped to get a cart whip. He was met by an angry crowd, led by Decatur among others, who unhitched the mule and drove the cart into the cane piece, telling Martin he was not to drive to the West End. It may well be that Martin wanted to use the opportunity of his instructions to be present in Frederiksted for reasons connected with the events of later that day. But so far as Decatur and the others were concerned, the mere appearance of collaboration on Monday morning, which driving the cart symbolised, was a betrayal. Phillipus of Mt. Pleasant was sufficiently enraged to hit Martin over the arm with a cutlass and force him to join in the march to the West End (R/A, VLA 1848: 112).

The difficulty of implementing a work-stoppage aimed at emancipation, is illustrated not only by what Martin King reported as happening at Bog of Allen on Monday morning. Habits of a lifetime were not easily dispelled. Even at Mt. Pleasant to which the enraged Phillipus was attached, some work had begun on Monday morning. The driver there, Jørgen, told the Court, however, that he was threatened with decapitation for this lapse by John Simmons, one of the men eventually condemned, and two others (R/A, VLA 1848: 71). Whatever the difficulty of its implementation, the strategy obviously struck a responsive chord. Forced labour was the essential badge of a servitude they were being asked to endure patiently for another eleven years until general emancipation in 1859. But in the meantime freedom had already come since 1847 for their newborn children; since 1838 for the British West Indies, including Tortola scarcely a cannon shot from St. Jan; and more recently since April for the French West Indies.

The deeply felt resentment is expressed in the language and



behaviour of Decatur, Phillipus and John Simmons. Comparable freedom, to work not at all, or on their own terms, was the substance of that independence they hoped to achieve that Monday and to maintain thereafter. This was the spirit which informed the behaviour of Edward of Rosehill on the morrow of emancipation. In an encounter with his erstwhile owner Van Brackle from neighbouring Spring Garden on the northside, Edward announced: "Mr. van Brackle here is your hoe and your cutlass. I will no longer work for you and if I work I will buy them for myself". Where upon, he threw the tools at Van Brackle's feet (R/A, VLA 1848: 175-76). The principle of voluntary work on freely negotiated terms was, before Monday and after, the only acceptable and dignified basis on which to establish the status of a free peasantry to which they aspired. It would take another generation to achieve. But for the present the objective was a powerful motivating force, and the strategy had a certain attractiveness, particularly when it promised the circumscription at worst and the avoidance at best of bloodshed.

#### VIOLENCE MANQUÉE: 2-3 JULY 1848

St. Croix's birthday of freedom was not, however, entirely bloodless nor characterised by an absolute absence of violence. Only incredible levels of discipline, universally applied, could have restrained physical assault on persons and property on that day. Yet the evidence indicates that those levels of discipline were in large measure realised. Two incidents involving attacks on white persons were proof of the rule by the proverbial exception. The first is not contained in the trial transcript but in Frederik von Scholten's account. It involved Major Gyllich, commander of the Fire Corps. Riding into town on Monday, he was chopped at by someone as he passed through a crowd, managed to parry the blow and after shouting, "I am a friend not an enemy", and throwing his sword on the ground, was allowed to pass (Von Petersen 1855: 102). Gyllich subsequently proved his *bona fides* by riding around on Tuesday, accompanied by Buddoe, and attempting to restore calm without force on several mid-island

estates (R/A, VLA 1848: 121-22). The conviction that he was sympathetic may have saved Gyllich when discipline briefly disintegrated on Monday morning.

The second incident involved Augustus from Concordia and John Lang, owner of Paradise, on the road between that estate and Good Hope on Monday afternoon. Each gave a slightly different version of how the incident began, but they concurred on how it developed, namely, that Lang who was unarmed took a stick from an old man and fetched Augustus two smart blows. In retaliation Augustus slashed with his sword at Lang inflicting a serious wound to the arm and a less serious wound to the hand (R/A, VLA 1848: 22, 33-34). By Augustus' own admission, and that of William Mc Farlane who saw him shortly after the event, he was pretty far gone in drink (R/A, VLA 1848: 29). There were thus important extenuating circumstances attending Augustus' loss of self control.

The other exceptional incidents of violence immediately preceding emancipation, involved the destruction and plunder of three houses in Frederiksted in the course of Monday: the Police Station and residence of Frederiksted's Chief of Police Andresen; Police Adjutant Didrichsen's house and Moore the grocer's shop cum house. The evidence led at the trial is not especially helpful as to motive in the case of the first two. It is possible to infer, however, that Peter von Scholten's absence in St. Thomas was widely known among the slave community and that in his absence the revolting slaves directed their protest at those whom they perceived as representing authority. This would help in accounting for the assault on Major Gyllich. Such an interpretation also lessens, if not discredits, the conspiratorial theory which suggests links between the governor general and the plot to revolt (Von Petersen 1855: 132; Prosch 1848: 416-17). Frederik von Scholten records it as his understanding that the slaves had come into town on Monday morning to "negotiate" with Frederiksted's Chief of Police for their freedom (Von Petersen 1855: 101). The destruction of the Police Station and the Police Adjutant's house must therefore be construed as a consequence of the slaves' frustration at not being able to extract freedom from this quarter (Hansen 1970: 373-75), as an expression of the seriousness of their intent

and a symbolic gesture of defiant uncompromising militancy. No examinee confessed to being in either police building and the trial record thus contains nothing to convey the electric atmosphere of that highly charged morning. The closest it comes is in the deposition of Malvina of Big Fountain who, standing outside Didrichsen's house, was unable to get in "as it was filled with people" (R/A, VLA 1848: 87).

A similar crushing throng was present at grocer Moore's. The sack of his building on Strandgade (Waterfront Street), in close proximity to and in full view of the fort, was inspired by the slaves' belief that Moore had advised the Fort Commander to "shoot them down like dogs". Moore's cook, Edward, who was present heard the crowd shouting the accusation. There was such an enormous crowd that he was unable to identify anyone as particularly responsible or who led the charge. They burst through the street door which gave access via a staircase to the rooms above which were locked. The doors to them were broken down by crow bars and axes obtained from the cellar (R/A, VLA 1848: 169-70).

It was impossible for the Court to apportion individual responsibility for the destruction and sack of any of the three houses, although Decatur's condemnation was specifically related to the rifling of Moore's iron safe (R/A, VLA 1848: 36). But on the day in question, the destruction of Moore's house gave the slaves an important psychological boost by emphasising their considerable advantage in tactical and strategic terms. It would have been easy to follow Moore's alleged advice, strafe Strandgade and mow down the insurgents either from the water battery or the gun emplacements at the fort's entrance. But this was not an option the whites could exercise. The slaves, in effective control of the town, had accomplished this without bloodshed in it. A burst of grape shot would have indiscriminately killed those in the streets while the looters in Moore's shop needed only to go through the back entrance into the street behind. This was the reason that Irminger demolished all the buildings obstructing the cannons' line of sight towards the north and east on Wednesday. Had the Fort Commander opened fire on Monday, the likelihood was that the slaves would not only have killed whites in retaliation but also put fire to Frederiksted (Von Petersen 1855: 104).

The vulnerability of the towns to fire was notorious. The slaves knew this and it led them to deploy a strategy in which the threat of Frederiksted's total destruction was their ultimate bargaining counter. When Frederik von Scholten ventured out of the fort with the Roman Catholic priest and some of the more courageous whites to calm the slaves in the streets, one of the leaders told him: "We can't fight the soldiers since we have no weapons, but we can burn and destroy if we don't get our freedom — and we will do it". This was no idle boast; it was clearly part of a well laid plan:

... close to the fort, behind a corner house and out of the cannons' reach was a large group of slave women with trash and dry cane leaves which, at the first volley from the fort, they would have lit and thrown through windows and doors. Since most householders had by then left their houses there would thus have been nothing to prevent such a fire spreading rapidly through the town (Von Petersen 1855: 103).

#### ATTITUDES TO THE FUTURE. RACE AND CLASS

The proceedings of the Court Martial also help to answer the question whether the slaves had developed ideas relating to a future less immediate than the acquisition of freedom. Accompanying the desire for freedom was an aspiration to property in land. There even seemed to be a sense in which that aspiration was born of a conception of land as *patria* to which they and not the whites had an exclusive claim. A similar view prevailed among the equally creolized slave population of Barbados in 1816 (Craton 1982: 258). Nelson, interestingly enough a *bosal*, who had worked at Mt. Pleasant, declared on Tuesday that if anyone attempted to arrest him he would cut them down "since the land belonged to them". A virtually identical expression came from Andreas of Envy, who told John Randall Findlay, a freedman before emancipation, that "the land would now belong to them, namely the blacks" (R/A, VLA 1848: 51, 74). Land as property was the indispensable basis of their independence as peasants. Beyond that, however, there were visions that transcended mere peasant subsistence and looked to the continuance of the mono-crop export economy run by freedmen. John Simmons told Richard

Doute the book-keeper at Big Fountain that there was enough land to plant cane and that they could build their own ships to bring provisions in (R/A, VLA 1848: 46). James Heyliger, one of those executed, made an important distinction between the destruction of plantation buildings and the destruction of cane in the field, since the latter "would be the country's loss" (R/A, VLA 1848: 4). This desire to own land and to maintain on it the production of cane as an export staple, probably explains why Adam's arson attempt at Rosehill was the only one such.

The corollary of those ambitions was that the whites would have to leave the estates or remain on them on a footing of equality at best or subordination at worst. The collective attitude of the slaves, where it did not celebrate their own race, condemned whites *qua* whites, denigrated them as figures of authority and judged them unflatteringly in terms of class. By the 1840s a great many of the overseers and book-keepers on estates in the Danish West Indies were Irish or Anglo-Irish, usually humble crofters in search of their fortune. More often than not, they were less familiar with plantation routine and management techniques than the slaves they were supposed to supervise. Their penchant for liaisons with slave women had a long history and this, with a predilection for drink and general hell-raising, made them a disruptive force on most plantations (R/A, GTK 1785b; *Fædrel-andet* 1841a, 1841b). Such white estate help did not invite the respect of the slave gangs. Karen Fog Olwig has graphically illustrated this in the case of St. Jan, instancing an 1847 case in which a slave Johannes abused the overseer Glasco in the most derogatory and scatological terms: "You are a come-and-go, my master is head-judge. You, pskaw! You a shitting ass (sic) Blanco" (Olwig 1977: 405 n. 19). The heat and excitement of the emancipation uprising and its aftermath was an opportunity for the expression of race consciousness; for the villification of whites generally and plantation help in particular; for expressions of challenge to and rejection of their authority.

Racial consciousness inspired the threat on Tuesday by Martin William of Hamsbay to Emilia of the same estate that "he would take off her head if she was on the white people's side" (R/A, VLA 1848: 78). Charles of Butler's Bay on the previous Sunday evening

had threatened anyone taking the whites' side with similar punishment. John Simmons, for his part, had a utilitarian concept of racial solidarity: he told the book-keeper at Montpelier that it was a good thing to proceed against whites as they had, or it would be the worse for blacks (R/A, VLA 1848: 32, 46). From racial consciousness and solidarity it was an easy transition to racial animosity. According to Eveline, a domestic in Frederiksted, Christian, a former house servant to the regimental surgeon, took very unkindly to a remark from a white school teacher to behave himself on Tuesday. Christian's reply was that he would not permit any white man to speak to him like that, and he would consider it a small matter to sever his head from his body. Christian denied the remark, but conceded that he was unable to recall everything he had done, drunk as he was at the time (R/A, VLA 1848: 57, 58). Indeed, even before the disturbances began on Sunday evening, racial animosity was in evidence. At Montpelier, Henry, incensed at the overseer's rebuke for impertinence on Sunday afternoon, declared that "his spirit was such that white people should be very careful with him" (R/A, VLA 1848: 80).

The decision to revolt was an effect of the renting of that veil of respect which clothed whites in slave society. But it was also cause. Several incidents involving manhandling, attempted manhandling and abusive remarks on and after Monday 3 July, demonstrate the extent to which the blacks of St. Croix were no longer contained by the established devices of social control. At Envy on Tuesday, several blacks from Negro Bay armed with machetes charged the book-keeper, who was only rescued by the timely intervention of some of Envy's workforce. Charles Conally, overseer at Hope, had a similar experience on Tuesday when he lost a silver watch and a watch chain (R/A, VLA 1848: 10, 162-63). Comparable examples can be cited from Camporico, Carlton, Sprathall, Mt. Pleasant and Spring Garden estates in the period between Monday and Tuesday (R/A, VLA 1848: 48, 54, 62, 71, 90).

What this as product suggests, is a process of "demystification" of whites, and it was exemplified preeminently in the behaviour of Isaac of Prosperity, from Tuesday a close associate of Buddoe. On Thursday at Hamsbay, Buddoe arrived with Isaac and others to

remind the owner, John Elliot, that slavery was abolished and along with it, the whip from the field. Elliot was told that if he did not agree to working conditions which the freedmen found acceptable, the plantation would be taken from him and any other likeminded white. To emphasise the point, Isaac struck the floor with his sword, declaring, "No nonsense Elliot". On Wednesday at Prosperity, again accompanying Buddoe, Isaac let his old book-keeper know that he had "an account to settle with him" and that it was a good thing he had not met him. The rapid evaporation of deference which this signifies is well illustrated by the third incident involving Isaac. With Buddoe at the estate The William on Tuesday, they both wanted to know who had given orders for work to resume there. Thomas Murphy, the overseer, assured them that he had given the orders and that the workforce would be paid. Whereupon, Isaac grabbed Murphy by the scruff of the neck, told him to behave himself and be quiet or he would rough him up (R/A, VLA 1848: 32, 38, 108, 133, 134).

Hated and disrespected, overseers and book-keepers were also objects of distrust. An important aspect of the immediate management of freedom, therefore, appears to have been to get white plantation help to leave the estates and to disarm them. The first objective was consonant with an aspiration to property; the second with a desire to minimize their vulnerability and to protect themselves, if the need arose, with weapons other than sugar-bills and cudgels. The depositions at the trial do not suggest by their number that the desire to drive the whites from the estates was a widespread phenomenon. But its existence on widely separated estates points not so much to spontaneous indignation on the part of individuals, as to a pre-arranged plan. At Adventure on Wednesday, Peter from Kingshill, a central estate along the Centreline, exclaimed: "Why is this white man still on the plantation?" (R/A, VLA 1848: 91). At Sprathall on the northside, "a large part of the workforce" demanded on Tuesday that the overseer, book-keeper and owner should never set foot on the property again (R/A, VLA 1848: 29). At Montpelier, another northside estate on Wednesday, Henry, cutlass in hand, told Hewson the overseer in threatening tones that he wanted whites "cleared away from the estates" and that it was best if they hid

themselves (R/A, VLA 1848: 79-81). Moorehead, the lessee of Camporico in the south was similarly threatened on Wednesday (R/A, VLA 1848: 16). The geographical spread of these estates — Kingshill from which Peter derived, in the island's centre; Sprathall in the northwest; Montpelier in the north; Adventure in the south and Camporiso in the southwest — is sufficiently wide to discount pure spontaneity as an explanation.

The plan to disarm whites on Tuesday and subsequently was said to have originated with Buddoe. Samuel and John from Camporico, both of whom engaged in a spectacular if unsuccessful horseback chase to seize the bookkeeper's gun, claimed to have received such orders (R/A, VLA 1848: 15). Buddoe disclaimed responsibility, although he admitted to riding around to several estates on the northside on Tuesday, requiring the usual distribution of food allowances and enjoining the workforce to look after animals (R/A, VLA 1848: 32, 105). There is no doubt, however, that he used the occasion to get overseers and others to hand over their firearms. Such was the case, for example, at The William on Tuesday, when in the company of Isaac from Prosperity, he demanded and got overseer Murphy's gun (R/A, VLA 1848: 133).

Buddoe's denial has the ring of veracity. If he intended to collect the guns himself, he might well have given no order. The fact is that the discipline which had prevailed up to Monday, had begun to wear thin by Tuesday and individuals like Samuel and John simply took matters into their own hands. The breakdown was facilitated, in the absence of regular rations in those confused days, by hunger and by drink: The continuance of the allowance arose as a specific issue on Tuesday at several estates (R/A, VLA 1848: 61, 101, 133, 152). A cow was slaughtered at Montpelier; sheep there and at Concordia; pigs at Sprathall and at Mt. Stewart where ducks were also slaughtered (R/A, VLA 1848: 79, 80, 100, 115, 134). Numerous witnesses confessed to being heavily under the influence of drink after emancipation was declared (R/A, VLA 1848: 24-26, 29, 38, 67, 81, 97, 103, 112, 126). There is some evidence too that some of the rum consumed so extensively might have been ritually drunk to symbolize binding engagement. Cuby testified that on Wednesday morning he was offered a



mixture of rum and gunpowder by some of the workforce from Negro Bay (R/A, VLA 1848: 179-80).<sup>8</sup> In such circumstances the revolting freedmen were less susceptible to the restraints of leadership. It is interesting to observe that after Buddoe had collected arms at The William, the workforce from Sprathall arrived some hours later to make the same demand on overseer Murphy (R/A, VLA 1848: 83, 84). At Carlton on the southside on the same day, there was also an attempt to seize the book-keeper's gun (R/A, VLA 1848: 59, 82). At Montpelier on Tuesday a freedman, Frederik, had already come into possession of a firearm. Asked to give it up by the Roman Catholic priest accompanying the party to read the emancipation proclamation, Frederik is alleged to have claimed that they had taken all the overseers' guns in the country. Making allowances for hyperbole, the remark if true, reinforces the view that the disarming of white plantation help by Buddoe alone, or by increasingly indisciplined subordinates, was a cardinal feature of the planning post-Monday. More importantly, Frederik is again alleged to have said that the guns would only be returned when they could have greater trust in overseers, or when they behaved better (R/A, VLA 1848: 176, 179).<sup>9</sup>

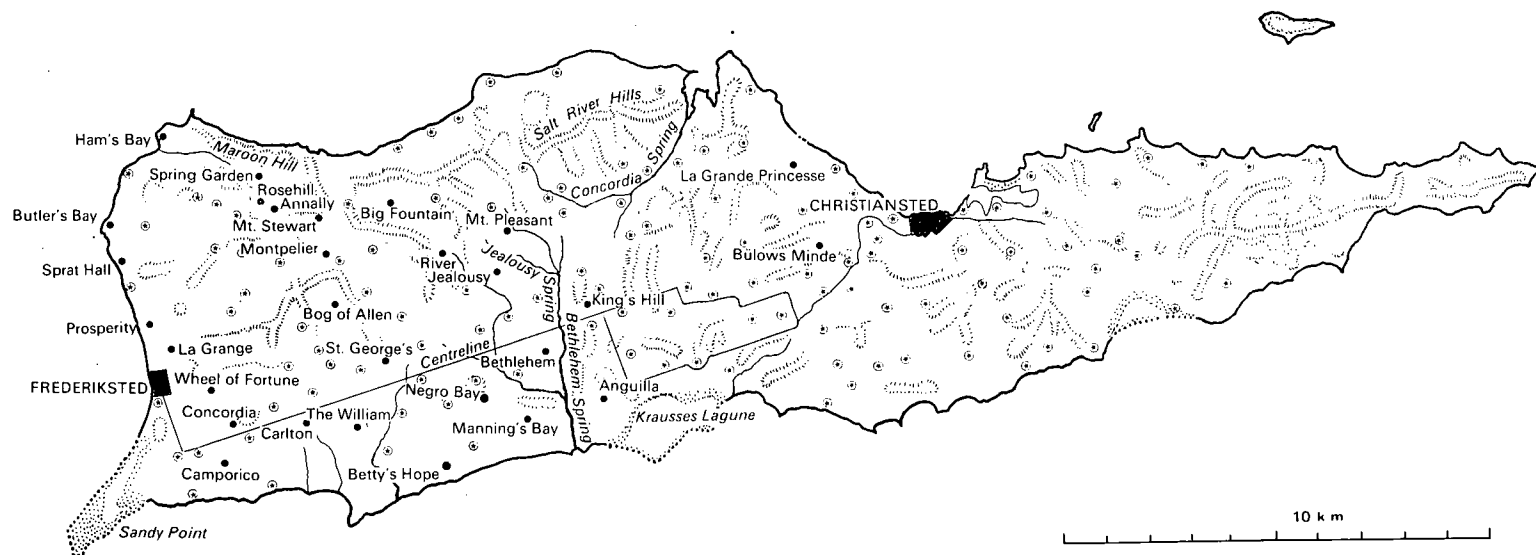
Here, distilled, was the very essence of the matter. Overseers and book-keepers, standard bearers of the *mission civilisatrice* had been weighed in the scales and found severely wanting. They generated hatred, animosity, contempt, distrust and bitterness. Augustus at Concordia smashed up the sick house precisely "because he had been locked up in it many times". Others too like Catherine from Carlton or Isaac from Prosperity, mentioned earlier, equally victims of arbitrary detention and the whip, had searing recollections as the basis for settling old scores (R/A, VLA 1848: 22, 82). Persistent bitterness inspired Joseph from Anguilla to shout treateningly at Envy estate: "Where is that fellow Lorentz? It's him I want". (R/A, VLA 1848: 83, 85). It would equally explain the insistence independently by Neddy from Grove Place and Pressent from Jealousy that Lucas' house at Mt. Pleasant should be destroyed, as it was a prison (R/A, VLA 1848: 51, 172). The fact that Thomas Clarke was overseer at both Jealousy and Mt. Pleasant which was contiguous (R/A, VLA 1848: 71) was, in all probability, not an unrelated circumstance.

## PROPERTY DESTRUCTION: 4-5 JULY 1848

Against this background, it is no matter for surprise that the extensive looting and destruction which characterised Tuesday and Wednesday, 4-5 July, were directed almost exclusively at the houses and personal effects of white plantation personnel.<sup>10</sup> The trial transcript is replete with instances, not of mere destruction of such property on several estates, but symbolic acts of violation and humiliation fuelled by extremities of rage. The many occasions (R/A, VLA 1848: 6, 43, 47, 48, 51, 58, 59, 69, 76, 160) on which ex-slaves bedecked themselves with threecornered hats, swords, military jackets and belts of whites who had fled in terror, were not so much gasconade as calculated demonstrations of the fact that the mighty had fallen. The looting of food supplies: salted fish and beef, flour, cornmeal, sugar, rum, beer and wine from the provision cellars of several estates (R/A, VLA 1848: 10, 18, 24) answered similarly not merely to the needs of hunger. Such looting represented as well the symbolic rejection of that authority in which control of plantation rations was vested. Chopping off the locks of provision cellars or breaking down the doors to them was arguably a form of cathartic release no less satisfying than the uprooting of the *Justits Støt* on Monday.

The almost endless catalogue of destroyed houses and personal property belonging to overseers and book-keepers invites a similar interpretation. Mannings Bay, Envy, Lower Love, Castle, Concordia, Adventure, Golden Grove, Jealousy, Sprathall, Hamsbay, Diamond, Ruby, St. George, Wheel of Fortune, Mt. Pleasant, Mt. Stewart, Good Hope among others, suffered in varying degrees. Apart from houses partially or wholly destroyed, the inventory of items most frequently mentioned as destroyed or stolen included clothing, bed linen, beds, bedsteads, wardrobes, cupboards, washstands, dining tables, porcelain, glassware, silverware, goldplate, objets d'art (R/A, VLA 1848: 8, 18, 23, 29, 72, 83, 86, 112, 115-17).

Another common *leit-motiv* which informs all the accounts of destruction, is the extraordinary violence. The explanation inheres only in part in the freedom with which rum was available from plantation stores. It inheres even less in Adam's religious



ST. CROIX: Location of some estates, 1848. Source: Map of the Danish West Indies (Copenhagen: Foreningen for de danske Atlanterhavsøer, 1907).

assignment of cause to "the devil in his head" for setting fire to the fields at Rosehill. One has to look elsewhere for the springs of that volcanic passion which led individuals systematically to demolish a dining room at Concordia; reduce a divan, clock and clock-stand there to splinters; or impale Lucas' globe at Mt. Pleasant on an improvised bayonet (R/A, VLA 1848: 51, 115-17). The effects in question could simply have been taken away as booty. Rum and "the devil" merely quickened an impulse to destroy whose roots lay deep in the long suffered indignities and abuses of servitude.

### WOMEN

One interesting aspect of the rampage between Tuesday and Thursday was the important contribution of women. It was pointed out earlier that they had assembled the trash with which to set fire to Frederiksted, should that prove necessary. At Negro Bay on Wednesday they again comprised another trash detail when Big Robert threatened to burn the owner's house down (R/A, VLA 1848: 8). Frederik von Scholten in this connection made the very interesting observation that:

Among the black population, women play a role of great importance. They do the same work that the men do and their physical build and size render them formidable adversaries in the rough and tumble of a fight. Throughout the disturbances they were more aggressive, vengeful and altogether more violent in their passion than the men (Von Petersen 1855: 117).

The trial transcript bears this out substantially. Rosaline, described by her former owner Jane Jackson as giddy-headed and childish, underwent no instant metamorphosis when she made the soberingly pointed remark: "Is there a war on? That can't be for in that case they would have burnt the town just as in St. Domingue" (R/A, VLA 1848: 135).

Women displayed a rage no less primordial than the men's. Slavery had after all made no distinction as to gender, and their sex had laid them open to the additional disadvantage of harassment, not to mention the perversion of normal maternal relations.

It is no wonder therefore that Mathilda from Frederiksted was an active instigator outside Moore's grocery; that a woman was co-leader with Big Robert in the sack of Negro Bay; that Sey, a woman from neighbouring Manning's Bay was also identified as a moving spirit at Negro Bay (R/A, VLA 1848: 54, 55). Another Manning's Bay woman, Sara, chopped off the legs of Knight's piano at Negro Bay, and was only prevented from chopping up the rest when Martha, who belonged to the estate workforce, lay on top of it to protect it (R/A, VLA 1848: 143). At Lucas' Mt. Pleasant, Penny from adjoining River took the first blow at the door with a cudgel, and when it did not give, proceeded to attack another door. The overseer Thomas Clarke commented that Penny distinguished herself with "threats of murder and cutting people's heads off". At the same estate, Present from Jealousy who had described Lucas' house as a prison to be destroyed, chopped up a cupboard (R/A, VLA 1848: 71, 172-73). It was Rachel wielding an axe who reduced the divan at Concordia to splinters (R/A, VLA 1848: 115). Violent in destruction, the women were remarkably resourceful in plunder. Unable to remove a whole mattress at Sprathall, Else removed the ticking and took the cover (R/A, VLA 1848: 135). Women were the main removers of plunder at Concordia and a large number of other estates (R/A, VLA 1848: 87, 116, 142-43, 174).

#### DIFFERENTIAL RESPONSES

It should be emphasised that not all the freedmen succumbed to such transports of fury. Notwithstanding the fact that Buddoe's writ had ceased to run island-wide since the morning of Tuesday 4 July, and such influence as Martin King possessed had begun to wane, their stand against destruction and plunder, of which the Court took note (R/A, VLA 1848: 32, 41-42, 120), apparently had some effect. For some freedmen, the psychological bond with familiar things and places, masters' as well as their own, or a *Weltanschauung* defined by the plantation as world, was not readily rupturable by the transition to freedom. Many drivers were as resistant to plundering as others were active in instigating it. Some

like Jacob Washinton, former crookgang driver at Spring Garden and son of the book-keeper Jasper Washington, perhaps had special reason to resist the rioters (R/A, VLA 1848: 90). The same would be true of William Borch, former driver of the same estate, who had a reputation for excessive use of the wip in the field, and from whom a number of freedmen sought "satisfaction" (R/A, VLA 1848: 80, 96). But there are no special circumstances to explain why John Peru, former driver at Upper Love, or Isaac at Paradise, both attempted to prevent destruction and pillaging on Wednesday (R/A, VLA 1848: 27, 152). Drivers apart, there were many former slaves, male as well as female, who protected property on many estates in the immediate aftermath of emancipation. They hid household effects in the quarters, in canefields and in trash, or bravely barred entrance to provision cellars at Enfield Green, Camporico, Bog of Allen, Rosehill, Carlton, Mt. Pleasant, Negro Bay, Adventure, Envy and elsewhere (R/A, VLA 1848: 5, 15, 30, 38, 53, 60, 69, 89, 179).

Among those free before emancipation, the events on and immediately after Monday 3 July, also produced no unilinear response. In Frederiksted there was a strong suspicion of this group as originators of the plot and potential allies of the insurgents. Nevertheless, it was their restraining influence, Frederik von Scholten reports, which accounted for the destruction in town being limited to three houses (Von Petersen 1855: 98-99, 101, 105). That restraining influence was also in evidence in the rural milieu, where by a growing convention in violation of a 1747 law, some freedmen before emancipation were allowed to live. Thus Edward Hein who lived on Negro Bay did his best to prevent destruction at neighbouring Golden Grove; Richard Gumbs disarmed the leader of the invading band at Hamsbay, and Samuel William openly deplored the use of violence at Bog of Allen (R/A, VLA 1848: 30, 54, 85). The latter's wife and five children were slaves up to emancipation. But his response is in radical contrast with that of Mathaeus, another freedman before emancipation, whose wife Sally had also been a slave. Mathaeus was the driver of one of the carts in which effects were removed from Negro Bay. At Negro Bay too, it was another *ancien libre*, Christopher from Manning's Bay, who allegedly helped in the removal of a hogs-

head of rum (R/A, VLA 1848: 44, 55). No common pattern of behaviour thus emerges. But this is hardly a matter for surprise in view of the disparities of economic achievement, aspirations and status among pre-emancipation freedmen (Hall 1980b: 69-72).

### EPILOGUE

The evidence from the trial establishes that the slaves of St. Croix pursued their purpose of achieving emancipation with unwavering single-mindedness. However, on the very morrow of emancipation there were signs of atomisation. In the trial itself freedmen freely accused other freedmen for their part in the events after Monday. Those who had achieved freedom earlier were themselves no more united programmatically. Such internal divisions weighted the scales in favour of constituted authority which remained intact despite the upheavals. The executions, and Buddoe's deportation at his own request (R/A, VLA 1848: 105) robbed the freedmen of their best potential leadership. Vanquished victors, the freedmen of St. Croix were poorly placed to confront the challenges of the first generation of freedom.

### NOTES

1. An earlier version of this paper was presented at the XIII th. Annual Conference of the Association of Caribbean Historians, Guadeloupe, April 1981. I would like to thank Arnold Sio and Richard Price both of whom made constructive comments and offered some useful suggestions.
2. All translations from the Danish are by the author who accepts sole responsibility for their accuracy.
3. The transcript records are in Danish although the depositions themselves were most probably rendered in English creole, the *lingua franca* of St. Croix slaves long before the end of the eighteenth century (West 1793: 325).
4. The Danish Slave Trade Abolition Ordinance of 1792 abolished import duties on female slaves until the trade's final cessation in 1802, and exempted such slaves from poll tax if used for field work, while doubling that tax on male slaves (Green-Pedersen 1979: 408). This policy reversed a well-established bias

towards towards males in St. Croix's slave population. By 1840 of a total of 18605, female slaves comprised some 52.2 per cent (Alexander 1843: 6). The preponderance was even more marked in the towns of St. Croix where in 1839 they accounted for some 62.6 per cent of the slave population (Hall 1983a: 19-20; Tables 2.4 and 2.5).

5. The popular literature holds that Gotlieb Bordeaux (General Buddoe) who played a leadership role of some significance during and just after the revolt, was an intimate of the governor general's (Ramløv 1967).

6. It certainly would not have been the first demonstration of obstructionist behaviour by the plantocracy to official policy. Frederik V's 1755 *Reglement for Slaverne* was withheld for this reason (Vibæk 1966: 146-47), and they were not exactly models of cooperation with the governor general's reforms in the 1840s (Hall 1979).

7. These are the testimonies respectively of an ex-slave from Sprathall estate, a book-keeper from the same estate, an overseer from Adventure and Major Gyllich, Commander of Frederiksted Fire Corps.

8. The absence of grave dirt was significant. Its use for ritually binding engagements in the "African" period of slavery has been noted for example by Handler and Lange in the case of Barbados (Handler & Lange 1978: 202, 207-208), and it figured prominently in the preparations for the 1759 St. Croix conspiracy (Schuler 1970: 23). It may well be that the absence of grave dirt in 1848 constitutes a useable index of creolization at that point.

9. Frederik denied the remark although Chamberlain Ferral, Van Brackle and Edward from Rosehill each independently corroborated the others' testimony.

10. Only two houses belonging to owners appear to have been destroyed: the notorious Lucas' at Mt. Pleasant and Richard Knight's at Negro Bay (R-A, VLA 1848: 47, 121). Remarkably high levels of absenteeism seem to have prevailed in St. Croix in the 1840s, thereby reinforcing the position of overseers etc. as the predominant point of contact with white authority on the estates. Of a sample of 83 estates in St. Croix in 1840, 41 or 49.3 per cent belonged to owners who were absentee. Richard Knight also appears to have been a recent purchaser of Negro Bay as in 1840 it was owned by the heirs of John Cooper and managed by Hugh Kerr, attorney for several other estates (R/A, GTk, CANS 1834-1843: 1840).

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## CARIBBEAN PEASANTRIES AND WORLD CAPITALISM

AN APPROACH TO MICRO-LEVEL STUDIES

### THE THEORETICAL PROBLEM

The existence, in the Caribbean, of populations generally conceived as "peasantries" raises many questions for practitioners of different disciplines engaged in so-called "peasant studies." Some of these questions have not yet been confronted. Within the dominant historical perception of the West, the word "peasant" usually evokes a being of another age — indeed, one most typical of the "Middle" ages — some specimens of whom have inexplicably survived "civilization" in the most "backward" areas of Europe. The presence of similar beings in Asia, Africa, and Latin America is integrated in that linear vision with the implication that the technologically advanced West first encountered such groups while the societies in which they lived were still going through their own equivalents of such "dark" ages.<sup>1</sup>

The empirical record suggests that the Caribbean does not easily fit such a mold. The pre-Conquest Carib and Arawak populations do not come close to any general or specific notion of "peasantries" the way some pre-Colonial mainland groups might. But in addition, European violence reached such proportions in the Antilles that the pre-Conquest populations were virtually wiped out before the massive introduction of African slaves. Caribbean peasantries, then, are peasantries whose emergence and growth came with the penetration of the Antilles by the West. Caribbean peasantries are peasantries that depend principally upon plants and animals brought into the region in the course of that penetration. With such notable exceptions as maize, cotton,

manioc, and sweet potatoes, the flora that sustain these peasantries have come not only from other regions, but from other continents altogether, after the so-called "discovery" of the New World. Sugar cane and coffee, of course (Deerr 1949; Trouillot 1982) — but also coconuts, rice, mangoes, breadfruit, and bananas exemplify the point (Mintz 1983). Caribbean peasantries are made up of populations whose very physical presence in the territories they now occupy came as a consequence of world capitalist development: the ancestors of today's peasants crossed the Atlantic under the supervision of merchant capitalists. What we have in the Caribbean may thus be a unique historical record of peasantries emerging socially and *physically* after the penetration of a peripheral area by the West — a sort of zero-degree of peasant evolution within the sphere of Euro-American capitalism, where no reference can be made to a past within the past.

That history challenges in various degrees and from different angles more sophisticated definitional approaches to "peasants" which nevertheless confirm, in part, the dominant linear perception. S. Silverman (1979) rightly suggests that the notion of a "peasant tradition" is based on the idea of a perpetuation of cognitive and behavioral patterns such that the final object of inquiry turns out to be the disruption of such patterns by outside forces. But in the Caribbean, "tradition," in any given sense of the word, succeeded modernity: the "peasant way of life" fully blossomed only upon the ruins of the plantations, amid the remains of the developed technology and the highly stratified social structure that King Sugar had fostered. Here, the "disruption" is our starting point.

The variety of situations under which peasant-like behavior occurred in the Caribbean and the time-span covered by such occurrences (Mintz 1974a; 1978; 1979) also seriously undermine any conceptualization based on an empirical assemblage of economic or cultural qualifiers. If our approach to real "peasants" presents them as tokens of an ideal type, then the slaves who cultivated their provision grounds and sold part of their product in local markets were tokens of two types, not one. Even aside from the epistemological problems raised by such an approach, the category "peasants" becomes non-operational, not because

actual analysis would then require a potentially endless list of subdivision (peasant-slaves, peasant-proletarians, etc.), but because, in that context, the first half of any such binomial would still not provide a basis for comparison, having no independent roots outside of the binomial itself.<sup>2</sup>

The particular history of the Caribbean also calls into question the growing tendency to couch conceptualizations of "peasantries" in terms of a "pre-capitalist" mode (or modes) of production. To be sure, the debate continues over whether any such mode of production to which "peasants" belonged can or does, survive capitalism.<sup>3</sup> But in the Caribbean, faced with the material impossibility of establishing an empirical connection with a pre-Conquest past, we would be forced to suggest that capitalism had generated "pre-capitalist" modes of production. Such a theoretical leap seems dubious.<sup>4</sup> Yet, if it could be made, one would face the dilemma of explaining the new "articulation" in terms consistent with the historical record. The question of operational validity again raises its ugly head: how could such a theoretical distortion enhance our understanding of particular events, past and present, on the ground?

Thus, the Caribbean record helps us emphasize three major areas of inquiry in the field of peasant studies:

(1) Given that the record seems antithetic to the notion of a pre-capitalist mode of production, at what level of the socio-economic structure can we start a conceptualization of peasantries?

(2) If Caribbean peasantries could emerge and grow at times when the region was fully integrated in the capitalist world-economy, what is the logic of that co-existence?

(3) Since that logic — in view of what we know of both the Caribbean and capitalism — seems to suggest the overarching relevance of world-historical processes, how does one move down from such macro-processes to micro-level studies?

The following pages will try to clarify these three issues; particular stress will be placed on the third, the sphere of human agency, where any conceptualization should reach its full operational relevance. But the starting suggestion here is that most people usually covered by the empirical generalization "peasant"

do indeed share a common practice, and that there is an operational concept in the critical literature on political economy that could serve to isolate this practice — the concept of labor process.

The notion of labor process encompasses all human activity destined to produce useful objects (use-values). At such a general level, the elementary factors of the labor process are human activity (i.e., *work* itself), the *object* on which that work is performed, and the *instruments* used for that performance (Marx 1967, I: 178). But the universal necessity of organizing production only enhances the diversity of forms that such an organization can take. All human beings must produce, but they do not do so in the same manner, and the empirical conditions under which they act encapsulate as many labor processes as we can distinguish specific types of work organizations. We can speak of different labor processes because we can conceive of and identify particular organizations of labor which recur with structural consistency. Indeed, the material and social conditions under which labor is applied are often such that the technical processes they delineate constitute, through time, a micro-ensemble regularly grouping the same categories of workers and similar means of work (Bettelheim 1976: 93-94).

Defined as such, a labor process implies specific instruments of labor regularly deployed on a particular object, in a particular unit of production, with a particular organization of the workers, toward the production of particular items. We can apply the concept to different organizations of labor and identify, say, a manufactural labor process, a plantation labor process, or a peasant labor process. A peasant labor process then appears as an institutionalized process of work through which:

- 1) a discrete domestic group
- 2) performs agricultural labor
- 3) in a unit of production of which it has *possession*<sup>5</sup>
- 4) with instruments of work that it also controls, but which generally constitute a lesser input than the living labor itself.

Obviously, the concept of a peasant labor process, as couched here, is one with modest applications. As such, it does not exhaust the conceptualization built around it, and necessarily calls attention to the larger socio-economic networks in which the units of

production that it isolates are embedded. Yet, before giving full attention to that embedding, we can already sketch some of the social tendencies that the work arrangement itself is likely to nurture.

The fundamental trait that emerges from the peasant work process is the overlap of the unit of production with a unit of consumption, an overlap which emphasizes the paramount importance of the domestic group for all peoples engaged in that type of work. The priority of living labor over labor embodied in the tools also reinforces the already crucial role of the domestic group. Thus we can suggest a tendency for all units engaged in that process to achieve, maintain, or restore a proper balance between the needs of the domestic group as a productive team and its consumptive needs. Types of "peasant" families will likely vary, at least in part, according to the contextual modalities of achieving that balance (Wolf 1966). Household composition will often reflect that need for additional security by taking the form of variably organized extended families (Shenton & Lehinnan 1981).

The paramount importance of the domestic group as a productive and consumptive team, and the preeminence of living labor over labor congealed or crystalized in technology suggest a complementary tendency to maintain and reinforce solidarity among the members. Of course, conflicts do arise and, at times, threaten the fragile balance between production and consumption. So do sudden environmental changes, especially in light of the relatively low input of technology. Such broad and inherent vulnerability of the production/consumption unit thus calls for external insurance which can be normative as well as economic.<sup>6</sup> Finally, a relatively firm set of rules and obligations, and their continuous reinforcement, are likely to reduce, if not the chances of conflict, at least the ways in which particular conflicts can be solved.

A second general set of tendencies can be derived from the multifold importance of land in "peasant" activities. All human actions require portions of the surface of the Earth as their spatial base; but there are several factors that distinguish the peasant labor process. The first, its agricultural character, seems obvious;



but it is less obvious that, as a consequence, land is *both* object and instrument of labor in addition to being the place of work. Second, the preeminence of living labor enhances the importance of land among the instruments of production.<sup>7</sup> Third, the overlap between the productive and consumptive domains implies that the domestic group shares discrete portions of the Earth's surface in both types of activities, even when the field is spatially distinguishable from the dwelling place. In the peasant unit of production, the family that works together stays together. Land thus stands as a social identifier of those who participate in the work process and share the same dwelling area.

To be sure, many of the traits sketched above — and others that could be derived from the factors inherent in the work process — have been previously drawn in various forms in the literature on peasantries.<sup>8</sup> The point here is not to claim major empirical discoveries, but to suggest, on the one hand, that many of the socio-cultural commonalities derive their impetus from the common work process and, on the other, that one cannot derive from those tendencies their specific modes of actualization, since the degrees and forms of engagement of any “peasant” family in that process vary.<sup>9</sup> As noted before, the concept of a peasant labor process is one of limited range; but its very limitations allow us a greater flexibility in historical analyses and, eventually, comparative studies.<sup>10</sup>

In a stimulating article on definitional treatments of peasantries, Mintz (1973) suggested a re-orientation of “peasant studies” toward the production of historically-derived “middle-level” categories which would flesh out the historical diversity of peasant groups within a national society or a specific peripheral area such as the Caribbean. While Mintz had long demonstrated his powerful insight in deriving such sub-groups from the Caribbean record (1961b; 1974a), little has been done systematically, since then, to enable others to further such a categorization, or even to repeat the feat in the Caribbean or elsewhere. An approach rooted in the concept of a peasant labor process may allow us to move to that middle level and produce such categories, since the concept of a labor process inherently points to that of *relations of production* which, in turn, restore historicity.

A few pages after sketching the notion of labor process, Marx (1967, I: 184) pointed out its inherent limitations:

As the taste of the porridge does not tell you who grew the oats, no more does this simple process tell you *of itself* what are *the social conditions under which it is taking place* [Emphasis added].

The concept of a peasant labor process thus necessarily calls attention to the social embedding of the peasant unit of production, and to the structural ties that bind the domestic group to larger social ensembles. Wolf (1966) had already emphasized the importance of such ties, but a most effective first step to their systematic discovery may be a study of the manner in which the peasant labor process is subsumed within diverse relations of production.

Limitations of time and space do not allow here for a comprehensive treatment of the distinction between formal and real subsumption of a labor process within capitalist relations of production (Marx 1967; 1971; 1976; Banaji 1978; Dallemagne 1978: 84-96; Faure 1978). Still, for our purposes, couching the coexistence of "peasantries" and capitalism in terms of the subsumption of a peasant labor process within capitalist relations of production has several related advantages. First, as noted before, we remain consistent with the particular historical data on the Caribbean. Second, though we acknowledge a common material base for "peasant" activities, human beings and their historically derived social relations remain at the center of the analysis. Thus, we give precedence to the circulation of values and the accumulation of capital as social processes (Dallemagne 1978; Salama 1975). Our starting point, the productive forces, remain secondary (Pouillon 1976) and we thus avoid any "technologism" or the "agronomic determinism" (Somers & Goldfrank 1979) for which Paige (1976) has been rightly criticized. Third, we can nevertheless integrate the rich fruits of particular studies couched in terms of mode(s) of production (Scott, 1976; Cliffe 1977; Hedley 1981; Soifer and Howe 1982; Bennholdt-Thomsen 1982) which have followed anthropologist Pierre-Philippe Rey's seminal treatment of articulation (1973). Finally, and most importantly for our purposes, we can more easily produce the particular historical

categories necessary to bridge the gap between our understanding of trends within the world-system and that of particular "peasants" of different times and places.

Such categorizations should enable us to determine the particular historical trajectory of each group defined, the logic of its coexistence with capitalism, and the levers of its economic, political, or cultural resistance. Yet the specific criteria that differentiate any two groups are not necessarily operative in shaping the distinctions between those two groups and any third group. Thus, the production of such historical categories implies a procedure that not only organizes an extensive range of factors leading to the discovery of the characteristics noted above but also allows for the differential relevance of such factors in particular situations. Such a procedure, then, requires at least:

(1) the identification of the particular historical conditions under which the group defined first engaged in the peasant labor process, and maintained that engagement;

(2) a study of the degrees and forms of that engagement, as determined by the relations of production, i.e., property and labor relations, as well as surplus relations or relations of distribution (Cliffe 1977).

(3) a determination of the means and degree of integration by which that three-prong set of relations inserts the group within a process of valorization (Dallembagne 1978: 85) — that is, a process of value circulation and, ultimately, of surplus-value production and capital accumulation (Marx 1976: 985–992).

That integration in the process of valorization might, in turn, occur in varying degrees:

(a) through the direct sale of labor power by those otherwise engaged in the peasant work process (Mintz 1974b);

(b) through the indirect sale of labor power by way of usurers' or merchants' capital (Roseberry 1976; Shennton & Lehinnan 1981);

(c) through the production of commodities outside of the peasant labor process, e.g., handicrafts (Wolf 1955);

(d) through the production, within the peasant unit, of commodities taken over directly by foreign capital (Trouillot n.d.);

(e) through taxation (Paul 1876; Tanzi 1976).

Obviously, such mechanisms are not mutually exclusive (Trouillot 1980) and serve as criteria of differentiation only in terms of their unequal importance. The chronological precedence of a mechanism of integration likely affects the subsequent emergence of others. Furthermore, the last three criteria imply an evaluation of the degree to which "outside capital" (Wolf 1955) is necessary to production. Also, while cases (b) and (d) nearly fit the model of formal subsumption of a labor process by capital, cases (a) and (c) suggest a slightly different form of symbiosis. Only empirical studies can reveal the predominant conditions under which wage labor or handcraft production coexist with the peasant labor process.<sup>11</sup> But the point is exactly that the procedure for differentiating within the "peasantry" must be applicable to particular historical contexts.

Indeed, the first major advantage of this procedure may be its utility for producing or verifying long-range historical categories. Agrosocial groupings such as Mintz's "early yeomen," "proto-peasants," or "reconstituted peasantries" of the Caribbean can all be differentiated, first of all, according to the conditions under which they engaged in the peasant labor process and the subsequent degree of their engagement. The procedure thus expands our chronological, spatial, and social boundaries, since we can isolate, at that first level of differentiation, groups that spanned several centuries, on a multi-national base — some of whom do not even fit the traditional image of the "peasant."<sup>12</sup> But more interestingly, one could also produce sub-groups within those long-range historical categories themselves, especially by differentiating in more detail, according to varied mechanisms of integration.

Indeed, since our first criterion rests on the historical evolution of the peasant labor process, we can always reduce that historical base, so to speak, to produce categories of a smaller range by applying the procedure to ever smaller segments of population. (Extensive use of those criteria within that narrower scope is likely to produce categories that may fall within the range of the two types usually treated as "middle" and "poor" peasants; but that is precisely where further differentiation seems most needed [e.g., Wolf 1955; Patnaik 1978; Bernstein 1979]). That increasingly

detailed differentiation of the peasantry (in terms of the embedding of the labor process) brings us closer to bridging the gap between local particulars and world historical forces. On the one hand, we can produce categories manageable at the micro-level but, on the other, the smaller groups so produced have been identified primarily in terms of their integration within macro-level processes.

Still, this identification does not consummate a micro-level analysis, if only because it does not inherently enable us to engage in, or profit from the meticulous observation of the groups engaged in the peasant labor process in ways that would bring out the relevance of individual actions. Yet such actions accelerate, duplicate, or, at times counteract the mechanisms of economic integration. Even if individual deeds eventuate directly from the particular embedding of the peasant labor process — and they rarely spring up as mechanically as this formulation would imply — they always influence the actualization of that process, if only by establishing new areas of emergent loyalties or conflicts for the groups involved. Most important among such actions are those that bring into contact members of the different groups defined by the mechanisms of integration in an empirical encounter among themselves or between themselves and the larger order. In the second part of this paper, I will suggest complementary means to integrate in the analysis the effects of human agency on the actualization of the peasant labor process and the form of its embedding.

#### AN EMPIRICAL FIELD

The principle suggested here in the organization of the ethnographic data is that of *mediation*, understood as a broad empirical field. Yet before laying out the modalities of use of that principle, and before building somehow on a particular “critical moment of mediation” in the Caribbean island of Dominica, it is perhaps best to denote, by way of a very cursory example, the potential results of the procedure of differentiation suggested above. One will perhaps then see more clearly the kinds of groups likely to emerge

from an analysis of the mechanisms that integrate the peasant labor process, and then turn to the field of mediation where various linkages between such groups are not only observable by the fieldworker, but also subjected to change.

In the Caribbean island of Dominica, most peasants first appear to be integrated in capitalist relations primarily through the sale of the bananas produced in their gardens to a British-based transnational company. Further, most are primarily dependent on the peasant labor process for the food that they consume: their diets include a high proportion of home-grown root crops, including plantains and, for that matter, bananas. Yet despite this appearance of structural homogeneity in a nationwide rural population of about 72,000, closer attention to the relative importance of diverse mechanisms of integration reveals further differentiation. The other mechanisms of integration rarely take precedence over the sale of bananas (and bananas still constitute the bulk of Dominican exports), but the existence of those secondary mechanisms, and their relative importance for particular sub-groups, do enable us to isolate sub-groups within that small population.

In the Mahaut area, for instance, which is relatively close to the capital town of Roseau and to industrial plants, integration through the direct sale of labor power (our mechanism *a*, above) predominates among sub-sections within some villages, as many "peasants" intermittently or regularly engage in plantation or industrial work, or provide domestic or other services to non-cultivating classes. The subsequent population surplus that those activities fostered eventuated in the creation of what I dub a *lumpen-peasantry*, torn between the security of the peasant unit on the one hand and individual ventures in a totally commoditized world on the other. Transistors and sweat suits abound in the area, but most villagers seem to hold to "a piece of land," through kinship or alliance ties, while desiring to benefit as individuals from the greater cash flow of wages. In the southeast of the island, the production and sale of bay leaf and bay oil lead to patterns of indebtedness toward richer peasants or landlords (often indebted in turn to urbanites). Peasants there depend on a few individuals even to bring their bananas to the buying points. A markedly

different ecotype, historical isolation, and the juxtaposition of mechanisms of economic integration has led there to the formation of a much more *clientized* sub-group — not just “poorer,” but more bound as well. Further south, on the west coast, peasants in the villages of Souffrière and Scotts Head are integrated in the valorization process not only through the sale of bananas and occasional labor on citrus estates, but also through the sale of fish on the national market. One could argue that the *fishermen-peasants* are often as “poor” as the bay leaf gardeners, and often in debt (especially when boat-engines are not fully amortized) — but also that the particular mechanisms of integration, notably the sale of fish (our type *c*, above) allows them more room for maneuver. They are not as threatened by the immediate presence of other rural groups, nor by the national contractions of the banana industry. Finally, all these sub-groups could be fruitfully contrasted with the *yeomanry* of St. Andrew’s (the most northern parish), whose integration occurs primarily through the sale of commodities independently produced on peasant farms (our type *d*, above). Yet while in St. Andrews South, in the area around Marigot, Wesley, and Woodford Hill, such commodities are usually restricted to bananas and coconuts, both of which are subject to monopsonistic control, peasants in the more northern Vieille Case area have long maintained a tradition of independent exchange, notably with Guadeloupe and Marie Galante, which often by-passes government control. This secondary outlet gives the same mechanism of integration through the market a different impetus in the case of the partly *independent traders* of Vieille Case from that of the equally “middle” peasants of Wesley of Marigot.

This sketch overlaps spatial differentiation within Dominica, but only because the island’s particular history of difficult internal communications has tended to produce or reinforce remarkable sub-regional differences. The procedure can be carried forward, with greater precision at the level of the village itself, providing that one clears the historical grounds for such a choice. Sub-groups within Wesley and Marigot, for instance, do present some of the characteristics of the *lumpen-peasantry*, particularly because of the proximity of the Melville Hall airport. Some fishermen in Marigot are integrated in the valorization process in a manner

very similar to what happens to those of Souffrière. The point remains that the exercise of differentiation according to the criteria proposed above does permit the production of categories of diverse spatial and historical ranges which can then be contrasted with each other, with other rural groups not at all engaged in the peasant labor process (e.g., a landless rural proletariat) and, ultimately, with non-rural groups as well.

The illumination provided by the juxtaposition of those categories in a particular historical context, in turn, sets the stage for empirical studies which could further bridge the gap between micro and macro levels. A broadening of the concept of mediation may provide the organizing principle necessary to classify the ethnographic data. The procedure suggested here involves a systematic search, during fieldwork, for *the empirical elements of mediation*, the observable links that tie the rural groups engaged in the peasant labor process among themselves to other rural groups, to urban classes, and to other areas of the world economy.

M. Silverman rightly argues that mediation not only links societal levels, but also competing sub-groups within the countryside and, in so doing, affects the "dynamic of economic differentiation" (1979: 482). She draws on the history of Rajgahr, Guyana, to demonstrate the multifold roles of mediators in faction and class formation. But agents of mediation are not always at the front of the stage, and primordial loyalties (Alavi 1973) do not always coalesce on the political scene. Thus, if (following Silverman) we suggest that mediation turns out to be a sum of unequal and contradictory processes, we will further insist that its various elements — and their differential relevance — are neither obvious nor predictable. *Mediation*, as such, does not have a logic: individual mediating processes may lead to dead ends; and mediation as an empirical field, its full of holes and broken lines, for it is the social "coefficient" of *integration*.

Two factors explain this empirical "disorder." First, though studies of mediation have emphasized formal economic or political ties (e.g., patronage, clientage), the actual liaisons from which individual mediating processes eventuate may belong to any "sphere" of human activity, or overlap different arenas of social life. For instance, a particular marriage or christening may rein-



force economic and/or political arrangements, but it remains, in its own right, a marriage or a christening. Second, not all the events that may constitute individual mediating processes are the results or products of conscious and rational decisions. Many come as unintended results of routine actions in which people might engage without any transactional aim.

The field of mediation, understood in such broad terms, is by definition, then, empirical, and we penetrate it by way of the discovery of *the empirical elements of mediation*. Such elements, characterized by their function at particular points in time (rather than by their functional nature) can be spatially fixed or mobile. Mobile elements of mediation can in turn, be material (*instruments of mediation*) or human (*agents of mediation*).

Spatially fixed elements of mediation can be first located within the village or the community itself. First among those are the economic "relay points" (Girault 1981) of distribution and circulation: for instance, the banana boxing plants of the Windward Islands, where peasants weekly deliver their products to be loaded on trucks which will carry them to the docks; or the shops of various kinds and sizes where peasants buy imported goods. But churches, post offices, health and police stations, schools, or, indeed, the frequently visited house of a broker are also, in different ways, spatial elements of mediation.

Other spatial elements may be located in rural towns, like the coffee buying point of the Haitian *spéculateurs* (Girault 1981). An empirical survey might also list locations in the cities (banks, financial, administrative, religious or political headquarters, or the house of a major absentee landowner) inasmuch as such places physically bring together diverse sub-groups of the peasantry in a common encounter with the larger order. Spatial elements do not always facilitate encounters in the most obvious and expected manner: many police stations in the rural Caribbean are traditional loci for domino contests which bring together players from diverse sub-groups of the peasantry and non-peasants alike. Such activities cannot be inferred from the nature of the station and require empirical observation.

Likewise, any mobile object can function, at times, as an *instrument of mediation*. Commodities, obviously, most often fit that

category; but so do newspapers, trucks, letters, and, at times, musical instruments or remittances. In many Caribbean countries, specific radio programs bring to the peasants messages from relatives or friends in town or abroad. It is not at all unusual to hear the announcer appeal to listeners in Trou to transmit to Janet X the message that her sister, now in Guadeloupe, wants her to pick up a package from the Boat "Cecilia," due to land in town the next day. Again, the range of interlocked individual actions implied in such an event, and the consequences of the long term repetition of events of that kind remain subject to empirical verification.

Yet anyone contributing to those empirical linkages can be seen, for that particular moment, as an *agent of mediation*. The older child of a peasant family working as a cook on a nearby plantation or as a gardener in town, pre-teenagers who daily walk to another village to attend the nearest elementary school, or the urban housewife who participates in a *pratik* relationship with a rural market woman (Mintz 1961a) all contribute to the general process of mediation. The term *agent of mediation* should not evoke, then, the image of a petty investor in social relations; nor is it restricted to the "mediators" traditionally favored by the anthropological literature.

To be sure, many agents of mediation may consciously partake of transactional aims (Barth 1963); and political leaders, brokers, middlemen, and hucksters do function more visibly and more systematically in the global mediating process. Their preponderant role in articulating group relations should be emphasized, especially since the tools for analyzing such preponderance have been increasingly refined (Wolf 1956; M. Silverman, 1979; Soiffer & Howe 1982). But a whole range of other people who may not systematically function as brokers or middlemen may, because of their occupations, participate in the invasion of the village by outside forces: teachers, police and health officers, truck drivers, missionaries, hikers and campers, or, indeed, anthropologists. In cases where the preponderance of traditional "mediators" is low, their presence may strongly affect the cultural or political balance. At other times, they may unintentionally contribute to the erosion of the traditional mediators' power. Other people

provide empirical linkages among the peasants themselves with various degrees of systematicity: owners of rum shops, organizers of cockfights, local choir leaders, village calypsonians, or policemen supervising domino contests . . .

The differential weight of diverse elements of mediation can sometimes be perceived at *critical moments of mediation*, that is periods of time when diverse individual mediating processes coalesce and agents of mediation are more likely to appear at the front stage. Political rallies are such obvious moments. But so also are the "banana days" in Dominica — and, likewise, in the other Windward Islands — when the purchase of bananas in "boxing plants," usually located in the confines of the village, sets in motion crossing mediating processes.

In Wesley, Dominica, for instance, the actual manner in which a particular family's fruits reach the plant reveals ties between and across rural sub-groups. The vehicle used might belong to a distant "cousin," and the fees for that use vary in light of reciprocal obligations; it might be hired from a richer peasant, a civil servant, or a shopkeeper, and its owner-driver might be paid by the bunch. But vehicles are in such demand on "fig day" that, at equal volumes, the order in which the owner decides to meet individual requests also reveals his own social priorities. Further, vehicle owners are not necessarily "richer" than their clients of the day: many are heavily indebted; others are civil servants with better credit but not necessarily greater income. The efficiency with which bananas are brought to the plant, then, is not always a function of one's financial situation but often an indication of social standing.

At the boxing plant itself, ties are constantly reinforced, broken or established. Bananas are evaluated, accepted, or rejected by fellow villagers temporarily working for the government trade board which functions as an agent of the transnational. Occasional employment as a "selector" may well improve a poor peasant's standing and bring him the friendship or the wrath of fellow villagers. But the proportion of "rejects" that a particular grower is forced to accept is also a measure of his/her social influence. The repetition of the constant power play between "selector" and grower, in turn, creates grounds for further dif-

ferentiation: in any given year, the returns of a more outspoken peasant are likely to surpass those of a quieter individual with similar technical and economic resources. Older men also tend to obtain fewer "rejects" than older women or younger men. Moreover, such displays of influence occur in front of a relatively large audience. Out of a village population of some 3,500 people, 800 individuals may gather at the boxing plant in the course of one day, some selling bananas, others selling food or drinks, others accompanying a friend or relative, and others — most often adolescent males — just "checking the scene." The continuous formation and breakup of groups at the plant provide to those participant-observers a mirror in which to perceive their own alignments across the boundaries of economic differentiation; but that consciousness itself may be put to use in reinforcing or changing those very alignments.

The accumulation of ethnographic material of that sort will not necessarily lead to the discovery of the structural linkages between the actors engaged in the peasant labor process and world capitalism, especially if differences of scale are treated in terms of a quantitative continuum rather than as the occasional manifestations of different levels of organization (Barth 1978). Often, the very perception of size will deter the observer from an analysis of the complex networks involved (Trouillot 1983), and the nation or the village will be held, *a priori*, as the "obvious" unit of analysis.

Yet the hope is that the systematic search for the empirical elements of mediation will at least bring to the surface events, people, and objects often missed at the time of fieldwork. Second, one also presumes that these data will necessarily include material not easily washed away at the micro-level and will force the analyst to recognize the limitations of his/her boundaries or pursue the empirical track up to the discovery of larger processes. Ideally, the search for those empirical elements should be done in light of the differentiation proposed above. The study of those elements could then allow the empirical re-evaluation of the historical categories which first lead to their discovery. A return to those middle-level categories with the more documented knowledge of their interaction, on the ground, may perhaps help us flesh out more satisfactorily the peculiar coexistence of "peasan-

tries" and capitalism. At any rate, the above suggestions remain tentative and should be read as a partial contribution to the continuous and multi-disciplinary search for a methodology that is sensitive to world-historical forces yet able to acknowledge particulars as sources of change in their own right (Trouillot 1982: 334).

#### NOTES

1. The fieldwork in the Commonwealth of Dominica from which some of the following material is drawn was carried out in 1979, 1980, and 1981, and was supported by the Program in Atlantic History and Culture of the John Hopkins University, the Inter-American Foundation, and the Social Science Research Council. I wish to thank Sidney Mintz, Sally Price, and Brackette Williams for comments and criticisms on this paper, even though I was unable to incorporate some of their suggestions. Finally, I did not have access, at the time of writing, to Chevalier's article (1983) on petty commodity production which enlightens some of the issues raised here.

2. A list of such binomials cannot help us determine, for instance, whether similarities and differences between eighteenth-century slaves and contemporary peasant-proletarians have roots in their common participation in plantation work or in their common engagement in "subsistence" production.

3. Many reject such survival as a mere "guise" or "form." (Ennew et al. 1977); but that solution begs the question of the nature and function of such "form." Moreover, to posit a necessary linkage between contemporary "peasantries" and "pre-capitalist" modes or forms still evades the questions raised by the Caribbean data.

4. Hedley (1981) comes close to such a leap in discussing petty commodity production in the Canadian Prairies, but one might also want to further the distinction between relations of *work* and relations of production.

5. *Possession* here does not imply jural ownership, but rather a power to dispose of, a form of control which excludes similar control by group(s) of the same kind (Bettelheim 1976: 93-101).

6. Kinship, alliance and patronage ties, may, for instance, provide additional use-values or money when the consumption level falls too low, or additional labor when production falls. But they often act also to reinforce from the outside the cohesion of the domestic group, by providing forums where internal conflicts can be aired and diffused.

7. That importance strongly differentiates, for instance, the peasant techniques from those of the capitalist farmer who generally relies much more on the dead labor embodied in tools.

8. Chayanov (1966), Redfield (1956), Wolf (1966) have emphasized in various ways the production/consumption balance, the importance of land, the role of the domestic group as well as the inherent vulnerability of the unit.

9. Thus, the disagreement with the marginalists or Neo-populist approaches rests on our contention that no labor process can fully account for the social ensembles in which the units of production are embedded, that no "society" is an addition of enterprises. Likewise, this conceptualization differentiates itself from the moral economists' approach by emphasizing the practical "basis" of peasant behavior, yet also by acknowledging that those tendencies are not to be found in any pristine form in the real world, and can even be reversed under certain conditions. Thus, rather than claiming that *the* peasant "aims" at subsistence (Wolf 1955: 454), we suggest that the relative importance of living labor gives rise to a tendency to secure the reproduction of the domestic group before any expansion or renewal of the instruments of work. The argument is not simply about terminology: in certain cases, a "peasant" family may very well use the wages of one of its members to face those reproductive needs. At equal income, a capitalist-farming family may very well cut down on "subsistence" as the only means of acquiring new tools. Still, we cannot derive from the "laws of motion" of the labor process itself any peasant "culture" or "tradition" (Redfield 1956) that would recur, *mutatis mutandis*, in all peasant "communities."

10. That flexibility does solve, for instance, the theoretical dilemma raised by the "peasant breach" (Lepkowski 1968-69) in plantation slavery. While it is difficult to imagine how and why "capitalism" would have created a separate mode of production (Cardoso 1979), one can easily understand the pragmatism of local planters who allowed or even encouraged an organization of work that shifted the responsibility of reproducing labor power from the master of the slave. Moreover, whether we call such laborers "peasant-slaves" or "proto-peasants" (Karasch 1979; Mintz 1961b; 1974a), we can effectively compare them with other historically derived groups engaged in the same type of activities.

11. It is clear that in many cases low wages or low prices of handicrafts can be explained only in light of the secondary engagement of the producers in a peasant-type activity that contributes to their reproduction. In such cases, the subsidiary nature of the peasant household — as a unit of production sustaining laborers otherwise integrated in the valorization process — allows us to speak of the formal subjugation of the peasantry. In other cases, we might want to keep the notion of an articulation of modes of production (Taylor 1979).

12. "Proto-peasants," for instance, did not engage in this labor process to the same extent as the early yeomen, or the post-slavery peasantry. Property relations particularly ensured that the slaves' gardens were only appendages of larger units of production, the plantations. Yet one could also argue that the planters' emphasis on the plantation work process may have allowed the slaves a greater control of distribution than some of their free successors. Likewise, property and surplus relations generally imposed more stringent conditions on the post-slavery groups than on the early yeomen.

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## REVIEW ARTICLES

### SIX CARIBBEAN NOVELS BY WOMEN

*Crick crack, monkey.* MERLE HODGE. London, Kingston, Port of Spain, and Exeter NH: Heinemann Educational Books, 1981. xiv + 112 pp. (Paper US\$ 5.00, £ 1.45)

*Beka Lamb.* ZEE EDGELL. London, Kingston, Port of Spain, and Exeter NH: Heinemann Educational Books, 1982. 171 pp. (Paper US\$ 4.50, £ 1.50)

*Jane and Louisa will soon come home.* ERNA BRODBER. London and Port of Spain: New Beacon Books, 1980. 147 pp. (Paper £ 2.95)

*The Bridge of Beyond.* SIMONE SCHWARZ-BART. (Translation, by BARBARA BRAY, of *Pluie et vent sur Télumée Miracle*. Editions du Seuil, 1972.) London, Kingston, Port of Spain, and Exeter NH: Heinemann Educational Books, 1982. xviii + 174 pp. (Paper US\$ 5.50, £ 1.95)

*Heremakhonon.* MARYSE CONDÉ. Washington, D.C.: Three Continents Press, 1982. (Paper US\$ 7.00)

*The orchid house.* PHYLLIS SHAND ALLFREY. London: Virago Press, 1982. xvi + 235 pp. (Paper £ 2.95)

Over the past two and a half years, six novels have appeared in English-language paperback editions that were written by and

about Caribbean females. Of the six (four of which were published earlier, two originally in French), three are the first such novels to be published in Heinemann's Caribbean Writers Series,<sup>1</sup> the primary source for present-day readers of Caribbean novels in English. If one excepts the works of Jean Rhys, which have long been available through Penguin and are now being issued by Norton, this handful of books probably represents the majority of Caribbean novels by women that are currently readily available in English. One might easily conclude that the number of Caribbean novels by women is very small. Indeed, a 1977 issue of *Savacou* devoted entirely to Caribbean women mentions only a couple of additional novels. But a quick count of women novelists listed in Donald Herdeck's *Caribbean writers: A bio-bibliographic critical encyclopedia* (1978) reveals approximately twenty writers in English, twenty-five in French, and ten in Spanish — over fifty in all. Almost none of the French and Spanish novels listed have been translated into English, but even the vast majority of those novels written in English are probably unknown to most readers of Caribbean literature. Clearly, we have been missing out on something, and we might wonder what. A brief look at the six novels just published may give us an idea.

*Crick crack, monkey*, by Trinidadian Merle Hodge, was originally published by André Deutsch in 1970. Now number 24 of the Caribbean Writers Series, this novel is similar to several other novels in the Heinemann Series — Michael Anthony's *The year in San Fernando* (1965), Geoffrey Drayton's *Christopher* (1959), Ian McDonald's *The humming-bird tree* (1969) and Joseph Zobel's *Black shack alley* (1950) — in that it is the story of a child growing up. But here the child is a girl. The novel follows the life of Tee from the death of her mother in childbirth and the departure of her father for England (where Tee assumes her mother has also gone) through the ensuing seven years to her own departure for England to rejoin her father. During this time she is mothered by two aunts, representing two opposing cultures. At first she lives with Tante, the sister of her dark-skinned father, in the country. There, in the midst of economic poverty, she is nurtured on the robust spirit of peasant life as it is revealed through her lively and down-to-earth aunt and a variety of other relatives and village people, including

the unemployed youth who loiter on the village bridge. Her greatest delight is her visits to her grandmother, who lives in "an enchanted country" in the hills, made even more magical by the Anancy stories she tells. A market woman, her grandmother engages Tee in her daily tasks of gathering the mangoes, chennettes, and plantains and of making the guava-cheese, bennay-balls, and chilibibi that she sells on Sundays in town, and she tries to encourage in Tee the pride and strength of her own grandmother. When it comes time for school, the local schools fill up, and Tee ends up in a make-shift class where she learns the lesson that will determine the rest of her youth: "that Glory and The Mother Country and Up-There and Over-There had all one and the same geographical location." Eventually her other aunt, "The Bitch," the sister of her light-skinned mother, carries her off to town, to "real" schools, and to her other self — "the Proper Me." She soon comes to see that "the whole of life was like a piece of cloth, with a rightside and a wrongside," and the rest of the novel recounts how Tee, now Cynthia, tries to resolve the conflict within herself between these two sides.

Zee Edgell's *Beka Lamb*, published for the first time in the Caribbean Writers Series, takes place in Belize and seems to be the only novel by a woman, if not indeed the only novel, to have come out of Belize. A fuller, more ambitious work than Hodge's (which often seems more like a collection of reminiscences than a novel), *Beka Lamb* records a few months in the life of its fourteen-year-old heroine, beginning and ending with her winning an essay contest and passing, after initially failing, the first term of her freshman year in a convent school. The significance of Beka's achievement lies in the tale leading up to these events. As in *Crick crack, monkey*, there is a sharp contrast between two ways of life. But whereas with Hodge's novel our sympathy is meant to lie with the unvarnished life of the peasant, the hypocrisy of the other world making us fear for the heroine, Edgell's story forces us to respect that other world, for it is turning (though ever so slowly) into the world of the dispossessed. "'Befo' time,'" Beka's feisty grandmother remarks, "'Beka would never have won that contest'; always 'the prizes would go to bakras, panias or expatriates.'" Indeed, not long before, Beka's place would have been with "the

washing bowl underneath the house bottom," rather than with "books in a classroom overlooking the Caribbean Sea." But Beka, the "flat-rate Belize creole," does win, and she does so without compromising her integrity. Instead of adapting to that other world, she makes it her own.

The tale leading up to Beka's victory concerns Beka's best friend, seventeen-year-old Toycie, and it is here that we see dramatically the conflict between two ways of life. Beka's resolution of it is not only as a disadvantaged Creole, but as a female. What she chooses for herself — the opposite of what Toycie accepts — is both the result of her understanding of Toycie's fate and the means by which she would thwart its repetition. Although Edgell affirms that there is much to be valued in the black Creole heritage, she sees nothing romantic about poverty or the pain and defeat that accompany it. Nor does she see education as necessarily merely an exercise in mimicry. Thus, when Beka decides to stay in school and try again, she does so out of respect for, rather than rejection of, her own people, guided by a teacher who values the lives, past and present, of those people and who instructs Beka in her obligation to serve those lives. But Edgell suggests that education is not enough to make the difference between defeat and victory. When one of the defeated women in Beka's world comments, "No mother, no father, no school. What can I do?" Beka realizes that her friend Toycie had only school, since her father had gone off to Panama and her mother had "lent" her to a friend and then left for the United States. Beka, in contrast, has not only her mother and grandmother, with whom she shares her life as well as her room, but her father, who also went to Panama, but returned. When Toycie in her trouble is told she must leave school, it is Beka's Daddy Bill who comes to her defense, as protective of her as he is of his own daughter. And though he fails in his mission, his constant presence as provider, guide, and companion — as a father — is what seems to make the difference between Toycie's fate and his daughter's. It is because of her whole family, as well as her education, that in the end Beka can announce her independence as a female.

Beka's painful growth towards self-government mirrors that of her country. As with Samuel Selvon's *A brighter sun* (1952), this

novel is the story of the maturation of a people as well as of an individual. Through the political activities of Granny Ivy and the business concerns of her son, Bill Lamb, Edgell gives us a fictional account of the turmoil of the year 1951 preceding the arrest of Philip Goldson and Leigh Richardson (here Gladsen and Pritchard) for sedition. Granny Ivy, a loyal member of the People's Independence Party (based on the People's United Party, founded in 1950), whether funded by Guatemala or not, is a strong opponent of West Indian Federation without Independence, seeing it as a British ruse to get cheap labor. Bill, who believes that "the British brand of colonialism isn't the worst we could have" and that one nation's independence is less important than the ultimate dependence of all nations on one another, is committed not so much to political as to economic reform through working hard and "using the opportunities available." Deprived in his own youth of an education, he sees Beka's initial failure as a lost opportunity: "The money you wasted could feed a poor family for six months," he laments. But whatever the strategy for improving life in Belize, there is general consensus that it needs improving. "Sometimes I feel bruk down just like my own country," complains Beka. "I start all right but then I can't seem to continue. Something gets in the way and then I drift for the longest while." What both Beka and her country want is self-respect — the ability to see themselves as something other than the trash left over after the sugar cane has been sucked dry, to use Granny Ivy's image. And when she and Toycie change the label on Toycie's guitar from "Made in Spain" to "Made in Belize" they are pretending, at least, that that self-respect is theirs.

Both Hodge and Edgell depict the conflict between two Caribbean worlds — the world of the predominantly black Have-Nots and the other world of the predominantly white and, to a lesser extent, mulatto Haves — within the lives of their heroines. Jamaican Erna Brodber's *Jane and Louisa will soon come home*, published for the first time by New Beacon, suggests that the burden of this conflict must be carried by the black woman — literally in her womb — and that its only resolution may be the negation of life. Neither an extensive family, an extended education, political involvement, nor religion can resolve it.

Brodber traces the life of her heroine, Nellie Richmond, from her sixth year, when the school inspector advises that she be moved ahead five grades, to her late twenties, by which time she has acquired a few gray hairs and a doctorate, apparently at an American university. During this time, Nellie tries to work out her "social identity" — an identity complicated by the incompatible lines of her descent. "Papa's grandfather and Mama's mother," Nellie begins her story, "were the upper reaches of our world." We gradually discover that "Papa's grandfather" is William Alexander Whiting, the child of "reddish-yellow" Albert and Elizabeth Whiting, and that "Mama's mother" is Granny Tucker, "with the two wiry black hands." By the black Tia Maria, William Alexander had fathered Kitty, who had married "Puppa" Richmond, the "black patoo." Alexander Richmond, Nellie's father, is their son. The heritage of Nellie's mother, Sarah, on the other hand, is probably pure African, Granny Tucker being the child of a slave and Sarah's father, Corpie, having fought as a black man in the Boer War. The multitude of relatives descended from William Alexander on the "pale" side and Granny Tucker on the black side make up Nellie's immediate family. But in Nellie's world "everybody is related," and the child is faced with threading her way through a maze of interrelationships, some of which are deliberately obscured by her elders. (The title of the novel refers to Nellie's twin cousins, exactly her age, from whom she hopes to learn answers to some of her many questions.)

Just as Anancy, the clever spider of the African folk tale, spins his white cocoon — his "kumbla" — to protect his offspring, Nellie's Great Grandmother Tia Maria had, through William Alexander, spun her "khaki" one. But the identity that Nellie is able to construct from the extensive family that is her kumbla is not strong enough to carry her unscathed into the outside world. Nor can it satisfy her upon her return. For in either place — because of Tia Maria herself as well as Puppa Richmond and Sarah — she is cursed.

Being female is bad enough. "Girls so hard to grow up," complains Nellie's Aunt Rebecca. "'Learn that the world is waiting to drag you down. 'Woman luck de a dungle heap', they say,



"fowl come scratch it up".'" But being a black (or brown) female is even worse. Rebecca, who is ashamed of her comparatively light skin, advises Nellie to "'save yourself lest you turn woman before your time, before the wrong fowl scratch you luck.'" Rebecca herself is proof of the dangers of ignoring such advice. Having become pregnant by a black man, she "threw away the child and made herself a mule," and spent the rest of her life paying for her errors. The best thing a black girl could do, according to Rebecca and perhaps most of the women in Nellie's world, was to get herself married to a light-skinned man. But even if a black female managed to feel some pride in her color within the confines of her kumbla — and Nellie does inherit a certain amount of pride from Granny Tucker — the outside world was waiting to demolish it. "The trouble with the kumbla," Nellie was to learn, "is the getting out of the kumbla."

Nellie leaves her kumbla by way of education, which is valued by both sides of her family. Knowing that "the things she loved would prosper in inverse ratio to her disappearance," Tia Maria had done "everything to annihilate herself." The more her children grew apart from her through education, "the more sure she was that they had found their places in the established world to which William belonged, a world that was foreign to her, a world that was safe and successful." Granny Tucker, too, had pressed education upon her children. Although Tia's Kitty threw over her education to marry an uneducated black man and Granny's Sarah gave up hers when she became pregnant by Alexander, the ideal persisted. Brought up "to take to learning," Nellie is pushed ahead in school, handed over to Rebecca for her secondary education, and ends up with a doctorate. But her education does nothing to prepare her for her life as a black woman. In the United States she discovers that she is, despite her education, simply "a nigger," and she returns home in anger only to learn that even in her kumbla education makes little difference. In the United States blacks don't lead; at home the blacks she is trained to lead don't want to be led. From education Nellie turns to politics, joining a group led by a black man who through education and practical idealism "had reached our highest phase of evolution." But when he is killed, the group slides into passivity, and Nellie finds herself

with neither cause nor lover. From politics she turns to religion, the Rastafarian Baba replacing the Marxist Robin. Like Robin, Baba is devoted to the people. But he demands a comparable devotion — to the people, not to him — from Nellie, and she backs away from the celibate order of this new savior, still searching for her own role as an educated black woman.

Baba's message, however, is not lost on Nellie. Moreover it is the same message she has received, directly or indirectly, from Aunt Rebecca, Tia Maria, her own mother, and practically every other woman she has known anything about: survival depends on the annihilation of either herself or her children. For "the black womb is a maw" that "sucks grief and anger and shame but it does not spit. It absorbs them into its body." Even if you "disinfect its fruits with fine sterilised white lint" or provide a "white lie," a kumbla, to protect it, "the game was lost: it was the womb or its fruits." Tia had annihilated herself in hopes of saving her children. Rebecca had annihilated her child in hopes of saving herself. Better to "take an antidote. Silence it. Best pretend it doesn't exist. Give it a cap of darkness, take a pill." Or better yet, "sit still like an alabaster baby in your kumbla."

In the end, Nellie refers to "a feeling of hope," envisioning, through a dream of a large fish in her belly that refuses to be born, a brighter future not only for the black woman but for all her people. But this image is only a dream, not strong enough to dispel (for the reader certainly and probably for Nellie as well) the despair already built up. And the structure of the novel itself, which mirrors the jumbled crystal fragments of a kaleidoscope — the spy glass through which Nellie hoped to learn the truth of her world — tells us that Nellie never did learn the answers. She had believed that "if I knew all my kind . . . I could no longer roam as a stranger; that I had to know them to know what I was about." Having gotten to know the inhabitants of her kumbla, she realizes that what her life is about is still a puzzle.

Simone Schwarz-Bart's *The Bridge of Beyond*,<sup>2</sup> first published in French in 1972, is, at least on the surface, an affirmation rather than a negation of life. Through the language of proverbs, which in themselves suggest a retentive strength carried from one generation to another, Schwarz-Bart conveys an optimism that

verges on romanticism. Set in Guadeloupe, the home of the author, the novel is the story of one black woman, Telumee, and her female ancestors, the Lougandor women, who create out of the very brutality of the world into which they are thrust a world of their own. Through a stoic acceptance of life as it is, they defeat despair.

Telumee's world of the impoverished cane society of the Caribbean is destined for disaster: "When, in the long hot blue days, the madness of the West Indies starts to swirl around in the air above the villages, bluffs, and plateaus, men are seized with dread at the thought of the fate hovering over them, preparing to swoop on one or another like a bird of prey, and while they are incapable of offering the slightest resistance." For the children of this world, the education they receive can do little to reverse their fate. "However much care it took of us, and our frizzy little pigtailed heads, school could not stop our waters from gathering," Telumee explains. It only "opened its sluices and left us to the current." The males of this world are especially vulnerable. Telumee's beloved Elie lifts himself out of the cane fields into the forests, believing that all he needs is "my two arms and my trade as a sawyer" to make his dreams of becoming a customs clerk and owner of a fine convertible and a suit with a ruffle come true. But he soon learns that his friend, the older and wiser Amboise, is right: they are all "like the kid tethered in the field," knowing that "the truth of our fate was not in ourselves but in the existence of the blade." As Elie's dreams fail, so do Telumee's. After a brief interlude in the outside world, where her "one thought [was] to keep myself safe, to remain intact under the white man's words and gestures and incomprehensible grimaces," she returns home to harvest "the three crowns" of a woman's life: "love, the trust of others, and that kind of glory that accompanies every woman who is happy." But she quickly learns that these gifts are "too great not to become dangerous in God's sight," and she is threatened with becoming like the women she had watched throughout her childhood — "women lost before their time, broken, destroyed."

What saves Telumee from her fate is the strength she has inherited from her grandmother, Toussine, who has taught her that "however heavy a woman's breasts, her chest is always

strong enough to carry them.'” In her “uncertain” world, with the other world hovering menacingly outside, Telumee does what the Lougandor women have traditionally done: try “to keep up my position as a Negress, to keep up the way I carry my soul.” It is the strength and grace with which Telumee and her grandmother confront the injustice of life that turn their world into one of “splendour.” In her old age, Telumee sees clearly “that heaven’s gift to us is that we should have our head thrust into, held down in, the murky water of scorn, cruelty, pettiness, and treachery.” But she also sees “that we are not drowned in it. We have struggled to be born and we have struggled to be born again . . .” “It may well be,” she concludes, “that all suffering, even the prickles in the canefields, are part of the glory of man.” Given this strong affirmation of the Caribbean black woman’s power to defy her fate, it is strange that Schwarz-Bart lets her heroine reach the end of her life childless.

Like *The Bridge of Beyond*, *Heremakhonon* (meaning “Welcome House”) is by a Guadeloupean, Maryse Condé, and was first published in French in 1976. But the heroines of these two novels could not be less alike. Although Condé’s Veronica Mercier acknowledges that she comes “from an island where the women are solid matrons” who “make up for males backing out,” those women are not of her milieu. The ones of her world have “realized that a real woman must have hay fever, allergies, and in short be the weaker sex.” Veronica’s milieu is the black middle class, a world of boarding schools, servants, second homes, Directoire decor, European travel, and pride in being “different from other niggers.” But Veronica is a rebel, “full of anti-grace.” Brought up to think she had nothing to be ashamed of, she discovers when she is eight, while on vacation with her family in a mulatto stronghold, that she is ashamed of her blackness, ashamed of her desire to be less black, and ashamed of “the black bourgeoisie that made me, with its talk of glorifying the Race and its terrified conviction of its inferiority.” After nine years abroad, during which time she acquires an advanced degree and a white lover, Veronica is still escaping her family, and she goes to Africa as “one of a new breed” of tourists, “searching out herself, not landscapes.”

In a world in which contempt or absurdity is to be found in

almost every corner (as well as on almost every page of Condé's novel), Veronica wanders from one continent to the next with cynical detachment. Wary of seeing Africa "through rose-colored glasses," she goes there "clinging to my objectivity," avoiding the "exoticism," "clichés," and "sentimentality" that surround "the Dark Continent." But her belief that in Africa she may be "born again" and discover "the love I am seeking for myself through her" is rooted in a vision "of a black world that Europe did not reduce to a caricature of itself. That might say: 'When the West was in a mess, we governed our peoples with wisdom, we created, we innovated.'" Thus Veronica goes to Africa "looking for what remains of the past," hoping to find the ideal Mandingo prince of whom her father is a degenerate replica, and for a while she thinks she has succeeded. But three and a half centuries have separated her from Africa, and all she finds is "a man with ancestors who's guarding them jealously for himself and wouldn't dream of sharing them with me." Her savior turns out to be one of "the most reactionary and retrograde" of the ministers in a new police state that is ruled by a modern Christophe trying "to prove over and over again that he was civilized." What Veronica finds, in short, is a black bourgeoisie that is even more contemptible than the one from which she has been trying to escape. Having "looked for myself in the wrong place," Veronica gains nothing lasting from her African adventure. Only for a brief period does she seem to shed her despair. As a witness to "the fight of a people for their liberty and justice," she finds herself having to "choose between the past and the present," and in rejecting the past as it is reincarnated in the new African bourgeoisie, she does rid herself of the detachment that has trailed her throughout her wanderings and learns how to feel. But this relief is only temporary. In the end, she is still brooding, still "face to face with myself. Trapped."

Phyllis Shand Allfrey's *The orchid house*, first published by Constable in 1953, is the only one of these novels that depicts the world of the Caribbean white Creole society. Set in Dominica, the birthplace and present home of its author, this novel is the story of a family of three daughters, each of whom represents a different response to that world. Of the three, it is Joan who most closely resembles the author. Joan sees that the old day of the white

Creole is over, and, having been trained (like Allfrey) in the politics of Britain's Labour Party, she comes home to take up the cause of "the mute suppressed people" of the island, anticipating Allfrey's own return to a political life in Dominica. With the help of "a common Negro," to use the language of her uncle, Joan starts "agitating the unemployed labourers into a state of unrest." Once reform is underway, she steps out of the movement, but by then she has accomplished her goal: she has revitalized not only her island, but her family and, symbolically, the world into which she was born. Joan's power to turn around the life of the island and her family is due in part, we feel, to the black woman, Lally, who nursed her and her sisters through childhood (a childhood, incidentally, of private tutors). The narrator of the tale through whose eyes we see the white Creole world, Lally is so confident of herself as a woman that she claims "small love for men" and is happiest when the house is free from the various husbands of the women who inhabit it. There is no sign that Joan has as little regard for men as Lally does, but her strength as a reformer seems to be due to some extent, at least, to her refusal to be intimidated as a woman. In contrast to Lally, the father of the family is representative of the decadent life Joan must revitalize: having degenerated after his experience in World War I into the realm of drug addiction and insanity, he is "a wanderer without direction."

The novels of both Condé and Allfrey bear some resemblance to novels by Jean Rhys. Veronica Mercier is very much like Rhys's Anna Morgan of *Voyage in the dark* (1934). Both are lost in a world pervaded by cynicism and contempt. About the only comfort either Veronica or Anna finds is in her recollections of the black servant who nursed her through childhood. And both women experience what Veronica calls "a secret unhealthy voluptuousness in being treated like an object." The similarities between *The orchid house* and Rhys's *Wide sargasso sea* (1966), however, are so strong that they suggest more than coincidence. Allfrey's portrait of "the Master"; characters, such as Lally; symbols, including the manor house; the flat, elliptical first-person narration; even specific names (Christophine and Baptiste); and above all the sense of some mysterious power waiting to dash the world of the white Creole to pieces are all here for Rhys to take up and use in her masterpiece.

Together, these six novels provide a view of the Caribbean that is remarkably comprehensive,<sup>3</sup> each of the authors bringing to her creation her own individual knowledge of some particular corner of that world. And probably because they are written by females about females, they provide considerable insight into the roles of females within Caribbean society. But for all of these novelists the most significant aspect of the lives they depict is not gender, but color. All of them write from the perspective of the social critic who is sensitive to this most pervasive and divisive force in Caribbean life. The central concern of each of them is how her heroine confronts the profound sense of shame that history — through its manipulation of color — has imposed upon her individual life. Whether she be black, mulatto, or white, it is this awareness that motivates her and determines the way she reacts to every other aspect of life, including being female. Even her pride is rooted in her perception of shame. Beka, Telumee, and Joan all come to terms with the anxiety produced by this sensibility; Cynthia and Nellie are still struggling; and Veronica fails.

## NOTES

1. Several West Indian novels written by men have a female as their central character, for example, Claude McKay's *Banana bottom* (1933), Edgar Mittelholzer's *The life and death of Sylvia* (1953), George Lamming's *Season of adventure* (1960), and Shiva Naipaul's *Fireflies* (1970). Herbert G. DeLisser wrote at least five such novels: *Jane's career* (1913), *Susan Proudleigh* (1915), *Morgan's daughter* (1953), *Psyche* (1953), and *Arawak girl* (1958). Of all of these novels, only one — DeLisser's *Jane's career* — is part of the Heinemann Series.
2. A second novel by Schwarz-Bart originally published in French as *Ti Jean l'horizon* (1979) has been republished in English hardback as *Between two worlds*. Its central character is a young black man who journeys from Fond-Zombi (of *The Bridge of Beyond*) to Africa in search of a means to end the suffering of his people.
3. For an even fuller picture, see the American Paule Marshall's *Brown girl, brownstones* (1953), recently republished by The Feminist Press. This novel, set in Brooklyn, focuses on a first-generation American girl and her Barbadian-American mother.

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CALYPSO ANTHOLOGIES: A CRITICAL REVIEW

Any reissue of calypso classics is a welcome event, sometimes even a real treasure. The second volume of *The Real Calypso* (Charters 1981), like its predecessor (Charters 1966), is of interest not only to calypso aficionados, but to linguists, historians, folklorists, musicologists, and anthropologists.

Calypso, as defined by the Mighty Chalkdust, "captures our whole lifestyle, history, social past. It's a reflection in song of our way of life" (1982: 66). What makes a calypso memorable?

A good calypso is usually remembered for one of two reasons: either the lyrics are outstanding or the melody is infectious. In the former case, it matters little that the melody cannot even be hummed correctly. What is said is so powerful that it stands on its own. In the latter, the lyrics are only incidental to the beauty of the tune... Naturally, the truly outstanding and unforgettable calypso is the one that manages to combine both these elements with success [Warner 1982: 20].

Many of the calypsos on Samuel Charters' recordings fulfill both conditions of melody and lyrics. The worthiness of these particular songs is underlined by the attempts of the editor to give calypso the serious attention it deserves as a genre. Few of the songs included here, even the most well known, are still available on original or re-issue recordings. *The Real Calypso* is rare among calypso recordings, both in its choice of material and the type of commentary (despite its shortcomings) provided in the liner notes.

Before examining these notes in detail, I provide a brief review of typical past liner notes to calypso recordings. It should also be noted that a number of thoughtful written works have addressed the poetic, literary, social, historical, and political aspects of

calypso, most notably those by Elder (1966), Rohlehr (1972, 1975) and Warner (1982). This review, however, is concerned only with notes accompanying disc recordings — either on the record jacket or on printed inserts — as these have been a principal source of information and misinformation for most calypso listeners outside Trinidad and the Caribbean.

*Overview of Calypso Liner Notes*

Calypso is not just “Yellow Bird” and palm trees, although one would never know this from reading notes to the vast majority of older calypso recordings. Most notes reinforce the popular international image of calypso as exotic, smutty, danceable, and marginally intelligible. There is, nonetheless, considerable variety in the quality of such notes.

A typical example of a minimal but acceptable introduction is that found on the “Sounds of the Caribbean” series (Request):

Calypso, the infectious rhythms and melodies of the Caribbean area originated in Trinidad. It is really the musical expression of the Afro-West Indian population. There are various explanations for the origin of the word ‘Calypso’, but it is most likely that it stems from the African word ‘Kaiso’, which means BRAVO.

The lyrics (in a dialectic English) and the melody are usually made up on the spur of the moment. The words very often have a double meaning. The topic is sex, but very often deals with current events of social and political happenings. The rhythms are enticing and the songs are therefore popular for dancing.

Other examples, while longer, include statements which are dangerously misleading or simply condescending. In Lekis and Lekis’ (1953) notes to a medley of old calypsos sung by Mighty Zebra in the collection *Caribbean Dances*, the language of calypso proves especially problematic:

Calypso which has developed throughout the English-speaking islands of the Caribbean has taken many forms. Some of the popular singers have almost eliminated the accent which makes Trinidadian speech unlike that found anywhere else in the world and which has become nearly a separate language. But there may still be found in Trinidad, especially in the season preceding Carnival many Calypso singers who present a form of music very close to the original with no attempt to make the words of the song understandable to any other than native Trinidadians...

Like the troubadours of old, for many years before education became more general in Trinidad, the whole story of a people was passed from one generation to another by the verses of the Calypsonians. The language is English but the characteristic of the Trinidadian speech is the misplaced accent on each word which makes it almost impossible to understand even after years of residence in Trinidad.

Among the linguistic fallacies presented here (e.g., "misplaced accent") it would perhaps be of some comfort for English-speaking listeners to know that some of the "unintelligible English" on this recording is actually French Creole. Some of the problems on this and other recordings are also attributable to poor recording techniques. Nonetheless, the question of intelligibility is a real one, and is discussed at greater length below.

An extended example of chauvinistic condescension and misinformed axe-grinding is found in Ariane Segal's notes to *Le Steel-Band de la Trinidad: Magie Caraïbe* (an edition that was issued, incidentally, without the knowledge, permission, or identification of the performers). After a relatively long discourse on Columbus' "discovery" and description of Trinidad in 1498, and on the role of the Spanish and, especially, the French, but not the English, in developing the island, Regal presents a history of music in Trinidad leading to the development of the steel band:

Le Trinidad bourdonne de chant, de musique et de rythme. Les Africains venus de terres lointaines y ont apporté leurs tambours avec lesquels ils honoraient leurs Dieux. Les missionnaires Anglais s'imaginèrent qu'en interdisant aux Noirs l'usage du tam-tam, ils leurs feraient oublier leurs idoles; leur ayant appris leurs cantiques, ils ne purent cependant les empêcher de rythmer le chant en se tapant dans les mains. C'est ainsi que naquit le Negro-Spiritual. Mais ils avaient toujours la nostalgie de leurs percussions.

[Trinidad hums with song, music and rhythm. The Africans came from distant lands, bringing their drums with which they honored their gods. The English missionaries imagined that in forbidding blacks the use of their drums, they would make them forget their idols; having taught them their hymns, they were not, however, able to prevent them from marking the rhythm of the songs in clapping their hands. Thus was born the Negro spiritual. But the blacks always longed for their drums.]

Thus passing blithely over the fact that the Africans who "came" to Trinidad were brought there by the French and English as slaves, Regal has placed the origin of the Negro spiritual in

Trinidad, rather than the United States. After tracing the development of the steel bands, grouped, according to the author, "*par affinités de races et de clans*," Regal gives a brief history of calypso, worth repeating in its pitiful entirety:

On croit généralement que le Calypso est né dans les plantations. Les Noirs, qui n'avaient pas l'autorisation de se parler pendant le travail, communiquaient entre eux par le truchement de la chanson. Quand l'esclavage fut aboli, la chanson devint danse, fit son apparition dans les carnavals joués par de petits orchestres. Harry BELLAFFONTE [sic] l'a rendu célèbre dans le monde entier. A l'heure actuelle, les STEEL-BANDS lui ont donné une nouvelle expression. D'où vient son nom? Il n'a sans doute aucun lien de parenté avec la déesse Calypso mais plus probablement avec le nom du navire "Calypso" dont les premiers Français débarquèrent en abordant la Trinidad.

[It is generally believed that calypso was born on the plantations. The blacks, who did not have permission to speak to each other while working, communicated among themselves through song. When slavery was abolished, the song became dance, and made its appearance in carnivals, played by small bands. Harry Belafonte made calypso famous throughout the entire world. Nowadays, steel bands have given it new expression. What is the origin of the name? There is doubtless no relationship with the goddess Calypso, but more probably with the name of the ship "Calypso" from which the first French landed in reaching Trinidad.]

It is difficult to know where to begin with so many glaring misconceptions: the lack of mention of traditional African precursors to calypso, and the French Creole calypsos of the nineteenth century; the relationship of calypso and other songs with dance, carnival, and the important but not-mentioned kalinda (stick-fighting); the role of Harry Belafonte; and the relationship of steelband and calypso. The crowning touch is the author's etymology for the word itself. (For a review of possible origins of "calypso" — in which this particular one has *not* been included, see Warner 1982: 8.)

During the 1950s, the electronics and sound wizard Emery Cook took a personal and passionate interest in calypso, appreciating its content and context in a highly personal and often eccentric way (n.d. 1):

Like farmer versus kangaroo, I never believed it myself until, after having actually heard it, I recorded a real calypso orchestra which played on true pitch, with reed and brass choruses interleaved like a squad of marines on parade drill. (Only for money, mainlanders, or when hopped.)

It is rather like the difference between an initiate and a novice at a ritual. The whole tenor of events can be misconstrued because of some basic misconception. The first of these is that they can't sing decently and can't pronounce intelligibly. Quite possibly this may be so in some cases, but the real answer is that they don't *want* to and don't intend to. Lined up alongside love and politics as targets for the jeering crossfire of calypso are the conventional notions of *good* music.

The second mistake can lie in the evaluation of the accompanying orchestras. Calypso engineered for mainlanders is usually played on a chromatic scale with divergences no bolder than a flatted minor third. These chaps are playing out-of-tune and raggedly because they are laughing while playing, or else they are speaking unspeakable lyrics into the mouthpieces of the horns they blow. They are just being swept along with the calypsonian into the making of a calypso's goal, a fully rounded pear-shaped atrocity.

... Passing quickly over the pedantic point as to whether or not calypso is music, and all music art, one emerges with calypso, this singular example of perversion.

In the notes to *Dance Calypso*, Cook (n.d. 2) evokes a devastating picture of a group of "incognito" Hollywood stars who refuse to respond to a calypso singer "working the tables for dollars," and the calypsonian's merciless revenge.

A more scholarly and archival, though no less appreciative, approach can also be found. The Library of Congress *Folk Music in America* series, edited by Richard K. Spottswood (1976-78), includes a number of individual calypsos in collections on themes such as *Songs of Love, Courtship and Marriage*, and *Songs of War and History*. Notes by Spottswood, Donald R. Hill, and others relate primarily to the history of the particular calypsonian, but spend some time on the social context, explaining, for example, the significance of references in the songs relating to obeah (witchcraft), carnival performances, and Marcus Garvey. The National Geographic album, *Music of Trinidad* (1971), includes several calypsos. The text, by Percival Borde, gives an excellent background to Trinidadian social history and music; the notes to the calypsos correctly indicate such features as French Creole lyrics, for example, but make no extended comments on individual songs.

Renewed interest in older calypsos, both in Trinidad and in North America, has led to increased attention in the form of radio broadcasts (for example, Rocky McCollin's series on Radio Trinidad) and re-recordings of some older calypsonians (for

example, *Growing Tiger: High Priest of Mi Minor*). But acquisition of the original recordings, as well as information on their social and semantic significance, has been practically impossible. Thus, the re-issues in *The Real Calypso* are notable both for making these songs available once more and for the attention that Charters has tried to give them.

### *The Real Calypso*

Samuel Charters, the editor of the two volumes under review, is best known for his work on blues, jazz, and folk music; he is on somewhat shakier ground with calypso. In the first volume, however, extended quotation from Elder's work provides a good, if patchy, background to calypso in its musical and social context. The introduction to the second volume is, however, more controversial. Certainly there is no quarrel with Charters' derivation of calypsonians from the West African traditions of singer-narrator, and Charters' attempt to link calypsonians in Trinidad with the blues singers of the United States and the Bahamian rhymers is well taken. However, in contrasting the political awareness of calypsonians and blues singers, Charters equates the calypsonian's position in society with that of the West African griot:

... the African singer, as an entertainer for kings, was expected to deal with the kind of subjects that powerful men in the society were interested in. The blues singer, on the other hand, was from the fringes of a suppressed group at the lowest level of American society, and he was forced [to] limit his song material to himself and his own difficulties in love and sex.

But calypsonians traditionally held a position outside acceptable society, to wit Atilla's "If I Won a Sweepstake," in which he states cynically that if he should suddenly become rich,

... the hypocrites would play that they didn't know  
That I used to sing calypso.

Popular acclaim was not necessarily establishment respectability.

Charters then contrasts the lack of social criticism in calypsos with the "more sophisticated political consciousness and the

emotional vibrancy of the belief in the Rastafari faith" of reggae. This is an interesting point, and a puzzle for calypso devotees. The huge international appeal of reggae, aside from the music itself, and notwithstanding the fact that many non-West Indians have difficulty understanding most of the lyrics, is probably due to its overt grounding in revolution/rejection of established society, its class analysis of social and economic oppression, its religious vision, and its often easily-copied associated mores such as ganja-smoking and dreadlocks. Calypsos have in the past enjoyed some popularity outside the Caribbean, particularly in the United States during the 1940s and 50s, partly helped by Belafonte's popular and more "English" recordings. The importance of the lyrics in calypso has led to two problems in extending its audience. First, many people outside the Caribbean do not understand much of the lyrics, sung not in English, but in Trinidadian English Creole. As Warner (1982: 28) remarks,

The question of clarity is of no small importance once calypsonians think of extending their market beyond the Caribbean. Sparrow, for example, recorded two versions of "The Village Ram," the second having more "intelligible" lyrics and more "correct" English.

Furthermore, many of the events or references in the lyrics are very local or time-specific. The second problem is that even for "intelligible" calypsos, the genre suffers from its longstanding reputation as smutty, amusing, ephemeral productions of a happy-go-lucky people. That the Andrews Sisters could have had such a rousing popular success with "Rum and Coca-Cola" — Invader's bitter indictment of prostitution and other social ills attributed to the presence of American soldiers based in Trinidad — is understandable only if the lyrics are not taken seriously.

Although traditional calypsos were almost always at base patriotic and often colonial, they were by no means uncritical of society, or, in the sense Charters seems to mean, politically uncritical of the current government. See, for example, Atilla's "Commission's Report" of 1938, in which he terms the official report blaming Butler for the oil field riots "one-sided":

In their ninety-two lines of dissertation  
 Is there no talk of exploitation  
 Of the worker or his tragic condition,  
 Read through the pages there is no mention  
 Of capitalistic oppression.

Many recent calypsos have been critical of many aspects of Trinidadian society. The biggest hits of the 1979 season, for example, strongly criticized the telephone company (Penguin's "Telco Poops"), legislative inactivity (Explainer's "In Parliament they Kicksin"), discrimination against Rastas (Explainer's "Dread" and Tobago Crusoe's "Dem is Guerillas"), and lack of economic planning (Shorty and Sparrow each had a calypso "Money is no Problem"), as well as support for African independence movements (Valentino's "Stay Up, Zimbabwe"). Nonetheless, it is true that although many calypsos of social comment are universal in implication, particularly in regard to human nature, many are specifically tied to local events, and while their observations are often acute, they are not often revolutionary.

Charters also states that "unlike the blues the calypso songs never developed one fixed form; so the musical arrangements are as varied as the texts and the subjects." This is not precisely accurate. While it is certainly difficult to define calypso musically, particularly fusion styles such as soca, there are boundaries. And although, as Charters interestingly notes, the playing of West Indian calypso musicians was influenced by American jazz, particularly the New Orleans style, it is still possible to distinguish the two. The inclusion of the instrumental "Sally You Not Ashamed" in this collection is misplaced; this is good jazz played by West Indians, but not any kind of calypso.

The choice of songs for such an album is always open to debate; everyone has personal favorites. It is commendable that Charters did not simply present the best-known or the most sexually explicit songs, but songs that are of historical importance, either for their subject matter or for the calypso tradition. Only two songs of his first volume are clearly inferior: "Let Go My Hand" and "Miss Bombilla Brown."

In his second volume, the subjects on the international scene



include the coronation of George VI (Executor – “Reign of the Georges”), the talent of Bill “Bojangles” Robinson (Houdini – “The Million Dollar Pair of Feet”), Mussolini’s invasion of Ethiopia (Tiger – “The Gold in Africa”), and Executor’s “Poppy Day.” Locally, Atilla commemorates the visit of two American missionaries (“Good Will Flyers”), Tiger describes a notorious street fight (“Hell Yard and George Street Conflict”), and Lion describes his “Excursion to Grenada” and the great Treasury fire of 1932 (“Out de Fire”), the latter with a trumpet rendition of a fire siren that puts modern synthesizers to shame. Lion also offers advice to parents who can no longer care for their children (“Send Your Children to the Orphan Home”), and Invader reminisces about past calypsos (“Rate Rate Ray”). Atilla makes some trenchant observations about human nature (“If I Won a Sweepstakes”). As for love troubles, Caresser and William Ted Lewis sing about two women’s conflict over one man (“Theodore”) and problems between a man and his mother-in-law (“Oh Lil’ Lil’ Gal”), respectively.

No information on the original dates of the recordings is given, although all are noted as having been recorded in the 1930s. Transcriptions of the lyrics in part or in full are given for all songs on vol. I, and for more than half on vol. II. There are extensive problems with these transcriptions. For the first volume, the most seriously affected songs are Executor’s “Three Friends’ Advice” and Tiger’s “Money is King.” On vol. II, Charters states: “Calypso songs usually have complicated texts and the singers enunciate quickly; so it’s sometimes hard to hear just what they’re singing.” This is indeed true in some cases, but the majority of problems with transcription reflect a lack of familiarity with Trinidadian English (and other vernaculars). In all fairness, the errors do not usually change the overall interpretation given in the notes to the song texts, although as discussed below, some such errors do occur. Accurate transcriptions would have been most useful not only for researchers but for general listeners unfamiliar with the language. Since lyrics and wordplay and “complicated texts” are of the greatest importance in “serious” calypso, the words should have been given more attention.

As mentioned, the summary given by Charters is reasonable in

most cases. For example, in "Send Your Children to the Orphan Home," Charters explains this apparently heartless or ironic advice as responding sincerely to the difficulties of the time. However, in a few cases, the notes are misleading or incomplete, or have missed the point. Four examples from vol. II will be considered here briefly.

1) "The Gold in Africa" – Tiger. Charters rightly points out the importance of Haile Selassie as a figure of independence for Caribbean and black American society, and the special anger felt by these groups over Mussolini's invasion of Ethiopia in 1935, while the rest of the world stood by. However, it is surprising to see Haile Selassie described as "a tribal warrior from the Ethiopian countryside who had himself proclaimed Emperor of Ethiopia in 1930." Although it is true that his claim to the imperial throne was, somewhat unusually, through the maternal and not paternal line, he was of unquestionably aristocratic lineage, grew up in the city of Harar, and was educated in a western French Catholic school. He was not exactly a "man of the people," and it was rather his ruling a free black country in Africa that made him important, even, as Charters notes, the incarnation of God for the Rastafarians.

Tiger's response to Mussolini's attack on Ethiopia is basically that Mussolini should expand elsewhere:

Why he don't attack the Japanese,  
England, France or hang on on Germany . . .

Try in Demerara, Venezuela or Canada,  
Austro-Hungar or else in America.

2) "Hell Yard and George Street Conflict" – Tiger. This song describes a street fight in the lower-class section of Port-of-Spain known as East Dry River, a fight which started when people "fought for a pack of cards." This calypso is particularly notable in two respects: political and linguistic. First there is the identification of the police officer called in to quell the disturbance with Mussolini. The leader of the "attack," on the other hand, "fought as Haile Selassie" and his supporters, "as Abyssinians." The defendants were pleaded for "gallantly" in court by the late Mr.

Hudson-Phillips, father of a well-known Trinidadian lawyer and politician.

Linguistically, in addition to a splendid example of calypsonian nonce formation ("I took a seat most procidedly"), Tiger quotes several linguistically conservative speakers — two in French Creole (Patois) and an Indian:

A coolie man was selling ripe fig,  
He said, Oh me god, no more me go live.

The correct lyrics to the chorus are:

The bursting of the bottle and the pelting of the stone,  
George Street was a battle zone.

In this same vein, incidentally, Tiger's quotation in "Money is King" (Charters 1966) of a Chinese speaker's English is a rare and valuable recorded reference to a variety of Trinidadian English already considered outdated in the 1930s:

A man with a collar and tie and waistcoat  
Ask the chineeman to trust him accra and float.  
Me no trust-am, bawl out the chineeman  
And you better move-am from me frying pan.  
You college man, me no know A B C,  
You want-am accra, gi-am penny.  
The worms start to jump in the man's belly,  
And he cried out, a dog is better than me.

3) "Excursion to Grenada" — Lion. In this calypso, Lion describes a commotion during his visit to Grenada. Charters writes:

It seems that when they got there they sang a local song and caused a small disturbance that soon became almost a riot. Part of the problem ... was that the police who were called ... themselves were young Creoles and they got involved in the fighting too. The Lion maintained innocently that even if they did sing the song they sang a different version of it .... The orchestra then shows how they sang it — not the bad way, which they also sing for comparison.

The actual joke of the song is a bit more subtle. Lion had originally sung a calypso, "Netty Netty," whose refrain was "Netty, Netty, gi me the thing that you have in your belly." This was considered

fairly bold, even in the Trinidadian calypso context, and although enormously popular, occasioned fights over freedom of expression. The objections in some places were so strong that Lion started fitting other words or nonsense words to that particular line, as in this version's "Netty, Netty, gi me the thing that you make with your coffee." However, everyone of course still knew what the real words were, and treated it accordingly. So Lion is counting on the audience to know the whole story, and he is deliberately teasing. Also, the constables didn't exactly join in the fighting:

When the leader saw the things was getting rather loud  
 He called a couple constables to dispatch the crowd.  
 Police themselves were young creoles,  
 And couldn't avoid the music stirring up their souls.  
 One said, "This is a serious case,  
 But I can't allow such music to waste."  
 So he up himself started singing, what he sang,  
 "Can can the swinging bay-bay-day,  
 Back, gi me back me shilling."  
 But he didn't sing, "Netty, Netty, gi me the thing  
 That you make with your coffee."

but in the singing. And then completely deadpan, Lion compliments the government for "endeavouring to stop the vulgarity sung by different persons carnival time"!

4) "Rate Rate Ray" [Ra Tirey Tirey] – Invader. This song is in part a tribute to famous songs and singers of the past. All but the French Creole "Madame Ophelia" can be categorized as calypsos.

I'm sure most of you all can remember  
 Henry Ford, Spasty and Marlborough,  
 And King Pantoufle from San Fernando,  
 Those were the songsters of long ago.  
 They used to sing, "Married man in the slaughtery,  
 Sweet man, eating talkari,  
 Yuh run, yuh run, yuh run, and why yuh run?"

However, Invader points out that modern calypsos, including his own, are better:

Now I remind you of a song they used to sing long time,  
 But they did not used to sing it in rhyme,

They never used to rhyme in the correct way,  
Like the modern songsters today.  
They used to sing, "Tina, whe you went,  
I went and tie me goat in the bamboo" . . .

But today we put rhythm in the calypso,  
Have you heard, "Take me down to Los Iros and  
Don't let my mother know"? . . .

These two volumes do constitute the "real" calypso, as Charters says: "the singers of Trinidad creating their own songs for the people of their neighborhoods," but their value and appeal go beyond any national boundaries. The lack of recognition of calypso, even in Trinidad outside the carnival season, and the loss of oral history as fewer people remember old songs, have been causes for concern both in Trinidad and elsewhere. Work such as the anthologies of *The Real Calypso* can be of considerable help in improving this situation.

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## REVIEW ARTICLES

### CARIBBEAN PEPPER-POT

*Amerindians of the Lesser Antilles: a bibliography.* ROBERT A. MYERS. New Haven CT: Human Relations Area Files, 1981. x + 158 pp. (Paper US\$ 15.00)

*Santo Domingo en los manuscritos de Juan Bautista Muñoz.* ROBERTO MARTE (ed.). Serie Documental Vol. I. Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic: Ediciones Fundación García Arévalo (P.O. Box 723, Santo Domingo), 1981. xxxix + 573 pp. (Cloth US\$ 15.00)

*Crónicas francesas de los indios caribes.* Edited and translated by MANUEL CÁRDENAS RUÍZ. Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico: Editorial Universidad de Puerto Rico and Centro de Estudios Avanzados de Puerto Rico y el Caribe, 1981. xii + 624 pp. (Paper US\$ 20.00)

*Race and ethnic relations in Latin America and the Caribbean: an historical dictionary and bibliography.* ROBERT M. LEVINE. Metuchen NJ: The Scarecrow Press, 1980. viii + 252 pp. (Cloth US\$ 14.50)

*Dictionary of Afro-Latin American civilization.* BENJAMIN NUÑEZ, with the assistance of the African Bibliographic Center. Westport CT: Greenwood Press, 1980. xxxv + 525 pp. (Cloth US\$ 45.00)

*The Jamaican national bibliography 1964-1974.* INSTITUTE OF JAMAICA, KINGSTON. Millwood NY: Kraus International, 1981. viii + 439 pp. (Cloth US\$ 120.00)

*Towards a bibliography of African-Caribbean studies 1970-1980.* BEVERLEY HALL-ALLEYNE, GARTH WHITE, MICHAEL COOKE (eds.). Kingston, Jamaica: African-Caribbean Institute of Jamaica, 1982. ii + 37 pp. (Paper n.p.)

*Les migrations antillaises: bibliographie sélective et annotée.* MARIANNE KEMPENEERS & RAYMOND MASSÉ. Montreal: Centre de Recherches Caraïbes de l'Université de Montréal, 1981. 53 pp. (Paper n.p.)

*Latin America: a guide to illustrations.* A. CURTIS WILGUS. Metuchen NJ: The Scarecrow Press, 1981. xxviii + 250 pp. (Cloth US\$ 16.00)

*Encyclopaedie van Nederlandsch West-Indië.* H. D. BENJAMINS & JOH. F. SNELLEMAN (eds.) Unchanged reprint of the original edition, The Hague-Leiden, 1914-1917. Amsterdam, S. Emmering, 1981. xi + 782 pp. (Cloth Dfl. 65.00)

*Dutch authors on West Indian history: a historiographical selection.* M. A. P. MEILINK-ROELOFSZ (ed.), translated by MARIA J. L. VAN YPEREN. Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde Translation Series 21. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1982. viii + 384 pp. (Paper Dfl. 95.00, US\$ 41.50)

*The Jewish nation in Surinam: historical essays.* ROBERT COHEN (ed.). Amsterdam: S. Emmering, 1982. 103 pp. (Paper Dfl. 65.00)

*Metamorphosis insectorum Surinamensium of de Verandering der Suri-naamse insecten: metamorphosis of the insects of Surinam.* MARIA SIBYLLA MERIAN. Edited by CHRIS SCHRIKS, with translations by P. A. VAN DER LAAN. Zutphen: De Walburg Pers, 1982. Unpaginated. (Cloth Dfl. 69.50)

*De wisselende gedaante: facetten van Maria Sibylla Merian.* J. E. v.D. LAAN. Zutphen: Uitgeverij Terra, 1980. 46 pp. (Paper n.p.)

*Reis door Suriname: beschrijving van de Nederlandse bezittingen in Guyana.*



P. J. BENOIT. Translated and edited by CHRIS SCHRIKS, with an English summary by SILVIA W. DE GROOT. Zutphen: De Walburg Pers, 1980. 99 pp. + 99 colored plates. (Cloth Dfl. 95.00)

*Avonturen aan de Wilde Kust: de geschiedenis van Suriname met zijn buurlanden.* ALBERT HELMAN. Alphen aan den Rijn: A. W. Sijthoff, 1982. 208 pp. (Cloth Dfl. 52.50)

The current sampling of reference tomes — intended to complement those in Price 1980 and 1982 — resembles that pinnacle of aboriginal Caribbean cuisine, the pepper-pot: for it, too, “is a compound of the most heterogeneous description” (Cassidy & Le Page 1967: 346), sometimes “palate-scorching,” sometimes “delicate,” “a kind of devil’s broth” (OED, s.v. Pepper-pot), something to dip into time and again, with a somewhat different flavor on each occasion, since new ingredients are added to the pot each day.

Recent works devoted to Caribbean Amerindians seem a fitting starting place. Myers’ workmanlike bibliography is easily the most comprehensive available guide to its subject, with some 1300 unannotated references by nearly 500 authors (vs. about 200 comparable references in Comitas’ *Complete Caribbeana*). The author, a social anthropologist whose own research has been with the Carib of Dominica, carried out archival and library visits in Jamaica and London as well as in major U.S. repositories, to produce six alphabetical listings, divided into Archaeology and Prehistory; Archives, History, Travel and Description, and Social Science Research; Languages; Biology, Nutrition and Medicine (very brief); and Literature (also very brief). There are both geographical and authors’ indexes, as well as a thoughtful Preface. Myers’ work provides a focused and selective counterpart to the more ambitious but far spottier pan-Caribbean Amerindian bibliography compiled by Sued Badillo (1977); that earlier work does, however, include a significant number of items on the Lesser Antilles not in Myers’, and the two might usefully be consulted together.

Marte’s impressive compilation of early manuscripts on Santo Domingo will be welcomed by a broad range of Caribbean his-

torians and anthropologists. Drawn from the magnificent Colección Muñoz in the Real Academia de la Historia in Madrid — Muñoz was the eighteenth-century historian who founded the Archivo General de Indias and whom Carlos III designated Cosmógrafo Mayor de Indias — these varied documents (including maps and other illustrations) span the years from Columbus' second voyage to the mid-sixteenth century. Marte provides a helpful historiographical introduction, careful annotations, a glossary, and indexes. This first volume is a most auspicious beginning for the new documentary series from the Fundación García Arévalo, which has been so active in recent years in publishing archaeological, historical, and ethnographic works on the Dominican Republic.

*Crónicas francesas*, which has a comprehensive ninety-page Introduction by Ricardo Alegría, offers a judicious selection of seventeenth-century French witnesses to the Carib world, with readable Spanish translations and careful notes by Cárdenas Ruiz. Samplings from the well-known works of Rochefort, Du Tertre, de la Borde, and Labat are complemented by those of such lesser-known observers as Du Puis, Chevillard, and Coppier, and contemporary engravings are scattered through the text. Overall, this is an attractive book and another significant step in bridging insular and linguistic boundaries; it should be welcomed by students throughout the hispanophone Caribbean.

The two recent "dictionaries" — one on Afro-Latin American civilization, the other on race and ethnic relations — contrast dramatically in quality and potential usefulness. Levine's book is almost an affront to scholars, librarians, and the people whose lives it documents, and should never have been published. The effect of reading its individual definitions is cumulative; the combination of errors, misinformation, and idiosyncratic selectivity truly boggled this reader's mind. From its remarkable definition of "Negro": "One of the major races of mankind, characterized by slight body hair, small ears, woolly or frizzed head hair . . .," it goes straight downhill: the interested reader might try, at random, the entries s.v. "Jewish Maroons," "Talkie-Talkie," "FESTAF," "Compadrazgo," "Chichicastenango Drunkenness," or "Racial Endogamy," and decide whether the appropriate response is to

laugh or to cry. Nuñez' more substantial dictionary (4,500 entries) contains a good deal of mainly accurate, if necessarily selective, information. A side-by-side comparison with Levine's work (s.v., for example, Abeng, Beké, Bozal) quickly reveals the contrasting quality of their definitions. Nevertheless, such a dictionary — one volume, largely single-authored — must remain so selective that its usefulness seems limited largely to beginning students. Considering the genuine richness of more geographically focused dictionaries such as that by Cassidy & Le Page for Jamaica (1967) or Holm & Shilling on the Bahamas (1982), or of Herdeck's encyclopedic work on Caribbean writers (1979), one might question whether a book that very selectively sprinkles, for example, writers and root crops amidst Afro-Brazilian cults and Jamaican proverbs is ultimately worth the very serious efforts and expense that went into its production.

*The Jamaican National Bibliography, 1964-1974* is a somewhat problematical, if handsomely printed and bound, endeavor. For its core is the "Jamaican" portion of the West India Reference Library, Institute of Jamaica, covering items acquired and catalogued between 1964 and 1974. Yet its publisher, Kraus International, brought out in 1980 a six-volume comprehensive catalogue of that same library, explicitly including all items catalogued through 1975. It seems curious that this latest volume not only includes a significant number of items not in the larger set (explicable, in part, because the new one covers the relevant holdings of several additional local repositories) but also lacks many apparently relevant items from the former collection. In any case, the entries in the newer, more specialized publication have been carefully printed and proofread, in contrast to the photo-offset uncorrected card-catalogue approach of the larger work (see Mintz 1982, Price 1982). The idea of an ongoing national bibliography for Jamaica is certainly laudable; the apparent lack of coordination of bibliographical endeavors even within one Caribbean state must, however, be deplored.

At the opposite financial end of the reference book production continuum, the African-Caribbean Institute of Jamaica has issued a modest, mimeographed checklist covering the last decade of African-Caribbean studies. Divided into General Works, Art,

Family Structure, Religion, and so on, it is a necessarily preliminary compilation that is, nonetheless, guaranteed to add at least a few unknown items to the bibliographic knowledge of even the most knowledgeable Afro-Americanists. May this kind of specialized, labor-intensive bibliographic work continue!

*Les migrations antillaises* is an annotated, very selective bibliography that will prove useful to beginning researchers interested in the geographical movement of Caribbean peoples. Thirty-three references about migration to Canada are followed by twenty-seven on the U.S., thirty-three on Europe and fifty-six on internal and return migration. The academic subject matter, like the social facts it addresses, continues to experience runaway growth, and a fuller bibliographic survey would now be most welcome.

The *Guide* to Latin American (and Caribbean) illustrations, according to its author, "fills a gap in publications in English relating to Latin America by providing an aid for a better understanding of the rise and development of these countries" (v), and he considers it a supplement to the twenty-three historical dictionaries to which Levine's work belongs. It is, unfortunately, a fitting supplement to that publishing venture. For Wilgus' own disclaimers about incompleteness and limitations do not begin to signal the volume's fatuousness. What reader — student, scholar, librarian, general reader — would benefit from consulting the pictorial references he chooses to cite? Consider these *complete* examples, from the Dutch, British, and French Caribbean: the full listing under "Bush Negroes" (surely one of the most photographed of all Caribbean populations) consists of a 1954 *Américas* article and a single plate from a general book on South America; under "Dominica" one also finds but two sources, the twenty-volume *Peoples of the earth* encyclopedia and a plate labelled "water fall"; and for the picturesque island of Martinique there are but the following five sources (fully representative of the kinds of sources throughout the volume) — *The tropics*, *Peoples of the earth*, *The West Indian islands*, *Christopher Columbus*, and the *National Geographic*. Compiling a successful guide to Latin American illustrations would be a massive enterprise, one that new technology could bring within the reach of the team of knowledgeable

specialists, from different countries, that would be necessary to accomplish it. The present volume, to which the author apparently devoted considerable labor, seems a thoroughly misguided effort.

*The Encyclopaedie van Nederlandsch West-Indië*, written more than six decades ago, represents to my mind the pinnacle of Dutch colonial scholarship on the Caribbean. The publication by teams of modern experts of an *Encyclopedie van de Nederlandse Antillen* in 1969 and an *Encyclopedie van Suriname* in 1977 in no way detracts from the achievement or continued usefulness of many of the articles in the original volume; it remains a major storehouse of historical, geographical and biographical information. S. Emmering deserves our thanks for continuing to make available once again important historical sources on the history of the Netherlands West Indies and Suriname.

Two other volumes make traditional Dutch scholarship on the Caribbean available for the first time to an English-speaking audience. Meilink-Roelofs provides a forthright, informative guide to Dutch historiography on "the West" during the first half of the twentieth century. The authors — many of whom will be familiar to readers of this journal — include, in addition to the editor, Bijlsma, Unger, van Winter, van Hoboken, van Dillen, van Overeem, Knappert, de Gaay Fortman, Kesler, and van Grol. The historiographical record, as she describes it and as the translated articles clearly attest, is far from overwhelming — Dutch colonial historians gave relatively little attention to their Caribbean possessions until very recent decades, and the selections she had to choose from were in many respects disappointing. But this is an honest and representative sampling, made more useful by the introduction and biographical notes. Cohen's selection of historical essays on the Jews of Suriname combines more traditional with modern scholarship: four previously published pieces (by van Lier, Bijlsma [the same article that appears in Meilink-Roelofs], Rens, and Schiltkamp) and three new ones, all presented here in English. Together they constitute a brief, somewhat miscellaneous introduction to an important corner of Caribbean history. There is a faintly hagiographic tone to parts of the book, with more stress on the Enlightenment values and learning

than on the often brutalizing day-to-day activities of eighteenth-century Jewish planters, but the competent original essays by Van der Meiden, Loker & Cohen, and Cohen do cover new historical ground. Most notable, perhaps, is a lengthy late eighteenth-century prayer written by a local cantor, presented here in both the original Hebrew and in English, which pleads for the Almighty's assistance against "our enemies, the cruel and rebellious Blacks [maroons]," and prays that "terror and dread shall fall upon them."

Finally, some recent largely-pictorial perspectives on the history of Suriname. Two new editions of the stunning work of Maria Sibylla Merian bear witness to the continued interest in this pioneer naturalist, whose brief stay in Suriname ended in 1701. The Walburg Pers edition presents the complete Dutch version, reduced in page size from the original, with new English summaries facing each of the sixty plates, making a color version of the whole work available for the first time to a wide audience. *De wisselende gedaante*, in contrast, simply presents eleven of the plates with their original Dutch commentary, interspersed with biographical information about Merian. One curiosity is that the Terra and Walburg Pers editions claim to have used the same Suriname Museum illustrations for reproduction, yet the Terra plates show lightly colored backgrounds and, in most cases, handwritten engraver's signatures, while the Walburg Pers plates — which seem garishly tinted and are printed on a white background — have the signatures dropped out and are all printed reversed. The interests of social scientists, as opposed to natural historians, in Merian's work derives largely from her several references to the uses of local plants by African slaves and Amerindians (e.g., the slaves' use of the seeds of *Flos pavonis* as an abortifacient) and from her fortuitous residence, during part of her Suriname stay, at the illfated Labadist retreat, Providence Plantation, whence a large number of rebel slaves escaped to become one of the founding clans of the Saramaka Maroons (see Price 1983).

De Walburg Pers, with financial support from Suralco, has brought out yet another colored edition of Benoit's *Surinam*, originally published in French in 1839 and reprinted in a fine facsimile edition by S. Emmering in 1967 — this time in a

reduced-page-size Dutch translation with an introduction by Chris Schriks and a fairly extensive English summary/commentary (originally published to accompany the Emmering facsimile) by Silvia W. de Groot. This edition, the least expensive currently available, should serve to allow a wider audience, including many Surinamers, to enjoy for the first time this nineteenth-century classic.

Albert Helman's richly illustrated *adjosi* to Suriname expresses a panoramic yet deeply poetic vision of his native land. From the opening pages of this oversized book, which overwhelm the reader with the geographical vastness and mystery of the rivers and forests of the Wild Coast, to its leisurely meanderings through colonial history, text and illustrations consistently complement each other and delight both eye and mind. In a work of this sort, occasional infelicities can be excused — the uncredited illustration on p. 141 in fact depicts a scene in Dominica, not Suriname; the plantation on p. 91 is Palmeneribo, not Palmenizibo; and so on. This is primarily a work of synthesis, a popular and accessible book that is at once a fine introduction for the general reader, and a provocative vision for the specialist to ponder.

Taken together, this pepper-pot of fifteen books certainly constitutes a sufficiently "rare Soop," what one seventeenth-century observer (Cassidy and Le Page 1967, s.v. Pepper-pot) called "an excellent Breakfast for a Salamander, or a good preparative for a Mountebanks Agent, who Eats Fire one day, that he may get better Victuals the next."

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## BOOK REVIEWS

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*Main currents in Caribbean thought: the historical evolution of Caribbean society in its ideological aspects, 1492-1900.* GORDON K. LEWIS. Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, Johns Hopkins Studies in Atlantic History and Culture, 1983. x + 375 pp. (Cloth US\$ 25.00)

In this recent publication in the Johns Hopkins Studies in Atlantic History and Culture series, Gordon K. Lewis, Professor of Political Science at the University of Puerto Rico, has presented "a descriptive and critical analysis of the total complex of ideas, sentiments, outlooks, attitudes, and values that, in the fullest sense of the word, constitute the ideology of the groups that have figured in the Caribbean story." Lewis, a Welshman who has been teaching in the Caribbean since the 1950's, has been among the most prolific of writers on Caribbean history and politics, among other subjects. His recent books include one on English radical thought and another on the Jonestown holocaust. This broad range of interests, an extensive reading in all aspects of Caribbean history and culture, and the humanistic perspective with which issues are approached, all make the present book a fascinating work of cultural and intellectual history.

This is not an easy book to describe or to evaluate. It is broad in its temporal and geographic coverage, with extensive discussions of the British, French, and Hispanic settlements over four centuries. Moreover, it does not fit easily into any subfield of history, ranging wherever the author's wide interests take him, and defining culture and ideology broadly enough to include extensive

discussions of slave life and religion in addition to interpretations of a large number of writers. While stating that this book is an attempt to do for the entire region what Elsa Goveia's *A study on the historiography of the British West Indies* had done for the English-speaking Caribbean, Lewis's scope and coverage are broader and the themes touched on go beyond those dealt with in that earlier, major work of Caribbean scholarship.

Lewis's approach is influenced by his aim to describe a uniform, distinctive culture for the entire Caribbean, a unique mixture of European and African ideas, with some influence from both early West Indians and later East Indians. This, of course, poses a number of problems of analysis and interpretation. The Caribbean was unique in being populated almost entirely by immigrants from elsewhere. The populations of the British and French settlements were soon ninety percent black and slave, but with the small number of whites having political and social dominance. And, while the Hispanic islands had considerably greater proportions of whites, they too were under metropolitan political and economic control.

Caribbean culture has often been regarded as an offshoot of other societies, and thus not an independent development. Further, the Europeans had come from several different nations, with different religions. The Caribbean was not the only, or even the most heavily settled New World colonies, of the metropolises. In addition, there are "some fifty or more separate and different island societies," raising difficulties for any attempt to stress uniformities. The region includes Haiti, an independent black republic since 1804, and the Dominican Republic, with its unusual political and social history, as well as islands that remained politically part of European empires until the end of the nineteenth century, and, in many cases, considerably longer. For these reasons the attempt to depict a unique, distinctive Caribbean culture, even an argument that such a pattern is evolving, raises questions and doubts. These do not, however, detract from the interest and importance of the work, from its value as a guide to an extensive literature, or from its informed and always interesting interpretations.

While the book draws extensively on the writings of contempor-

aries, mainly colonial elites, Lewis's major interest is in what he calls "culture in its anthropological sense" — the popular folk culture of the "subject masses." In part this reflects what he regards as the relative poverty of elite intellectual and cultural development, in part his concern with "the struggles of dependent peoples." Important to Lewis is the use of "religion, music, dance, language, folklore," and other aspects of folk culture as a basis for group survival and as a symbol of resistance to master-class controls. Thus, as the concluding chapter argues against Edward Braithwaite, it was not a shared culture of Europeans and Africans. Lewis sees the influence of "European metropolitan modes of thought," "absorbed and assimilated" by "a subtle creolizing movement," leading to an "indigenous collection of ideas and values that can properly be termed Caribbean *sui generis*."

Lewis divides the span 1492–1900 into three periods, with distinct ideological themes. The periodization poses problems, but the division into three central issues — proslavery, antislavery, and nationalism — serves as a useful organizing device. After chapters on "The sociohistorical setting," describing Caribbean settlement in relation to the expansion of European capitalism, and "The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries: the beginnings of Caribbean thought," as it was reflected in the writings of early travel writers and secular and religious officials, each major ideology is given a separate chapter.

The discussion of proslavery ideology treats some familiar figures in a relatively sympathetic manner, even when Lewis is in profound disagreement with them. The discussions of Edward Long, Bryan Edwards, Moreau de Saint-Méry, Hilliard d'Auberteuil, Francisco de Arango y Parreño, and José Antonio Saco place them in the liberal, nationalist tradition, and Lewis accuses them more of cultural than of racial prejudice. He clearly points out that none of the writers discussed advocated an ending of the slave system, even when sometimes arguing for better treatment of the slaves. Further, he contends that a full-blown racial ideology to justify slavery was a rather late development, with the proslavery racism persisting into the period after emancipation.

The chapter on the antislavery ideology is unexpected in contents, although, upon reflection it is an obvious implication of the author's schemata. Rather than putting emphasis on the usual discussions of British and French antislavery thought, most of the chapter is devoted to the slave experience, subdivided into: "the category of patterns of accomodation and of habits of learned survival in the daily experience of plantation life"; "the category of alternative life-style"; and "the category of escape and open revolt." There is emphasis on slave religion, and the chapter includes an interesting discussion of the ultimate impact of religion upon slave resistance, concluding that "Nonconformist Christianity and liberty" were linked.

The chapter on nationalist thought discusses both cultural and political dimensions, and Lewis points to the early link of proslavery apologetics with West Indian localism. Nevertheless, the main thrust is on writings in Haiti, Santo Domingo, and Cuba. Attention is given to the explicit intent of Haitian historical writings to provide a "patriotic reconstruction of the past," and to the important emphasis on establishing "the place of the Negro in the world as a cultural equal." While regarding these developments as forerunners, Lewis distinguishes them from Pan-Africanism, a movement not emerging until the twentieth century, while his argument that even the Haitian writers were still working within the European tradition leads him to separate them from the later ideology of *négritude*.

Brief summary cannot convey the full flavor of the work, with its many interesting discussions of seemingly unrelated themes (e.g., the nature of piracy; the use in European Utopian thought of the Caribbean experience) and of a large number of individual writers in several different languages. Lewis never refrains from moral judgment. This does not preclude a subtle analysis of the issues raised, while the occasional attempt to find an early socialist heritage does make for some unusual interpretations. A rather idiosyncratic book, the depth of Lewis's scholarship makes this an important book for all interested in Caribbean history and thought, whatever they may conclude about his views on specific

issues and individuals and on the basic question of the patterns of emergence and development of a Caribbean ideology.

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*Europe and the people without history.* ERIC R. WOLF. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1982. xi + 503 pp. (Cloth US\$ 29.95, Paper US\$ 8.95)

Eric Wolf was never daunted that "all the King's horses and all the King's men couldn't put Humpty together again." Wolf has challenged us to reassemble the knowledge of our world, so refracted by the ways we have chosen to look at it and to study it. Importantly for us, he has taken up his own challenge and has sought to present the world over the past five centuries as a process of connection. For Wolf, the world has never been a composition of distinctive cultures and peoples. He argues deftly against notions of primordial ethnicities and cultures. Here he fields bountiful evidence, there he suggests persuasively, that the historical and cultural markers among the world's peoples are constructed through the articulation of economic relations.

*Europe and the people without history* is three major studies within a single cover. First, it is a warm, readable text on the history of European expansion, taking up the standard topics of the fur trade, the slave trade, the spice trade, capitalism, the industrial revolution, and international labor migration. Second, it is a critique of the social sciences. Not an outright blast, the critical edge is formed by its global conspectus and honed by its erudition. Third, it is a considered and candid intellectual autobiography.

In writing a history of the world, book one within the book, Wolf plays with our notions of the world. Writing of Africa, to take an example, he notes that students of the continent conventionally attempt to press a thousand notional ethnic units into different series of finite categories: for example, the dyadic classification of centralized societies and acephalous segmentary societies. Wolf

then turns this simple framework on its edge, spins it a quarter revolution and, within what looks on the surface to be now a standard treatment, argues that these historic differences in social organization were the outcomes of the forces and processes of connection in regional and international commerce. The thread of his argument moves swiftly from the forest margins of West Africa in the seventeenth century to the plains of anthropological discourse in the twentieth. Armed with historical argumentation, Wolf's enemy is most often the handed down authority of the anthropological literature on a given people or area.

As readers work their way through the book, they will find less familiar areas of the world brought forward and together clearly and painlessly. Terrific distances are covered in a few paragraphs. When one reads the more familiar areas, Wolf's method is revealed. Like a balloonist requiring frequent refreshment, he pilots himself, and the reader, from one well known piece of secondary literature or major monograph (published up to the mid-1970s) to another and then another. He carries us from Mary Douglas to Ray Kea to Ivor Wilks to William Bascom to George Balandier to Victor Turner. The tableau is not George Murdock's cultural map of Africa. It is not even a heavily worked analysis of process in specific regions of the world. It is, rather, a pastiche of perspectives on sections of African life past and present, which at another level become suggestive of general process. Occasionally, momentous and critical problems of long historical process must be, or are, finessed in a few sentences, as with the discussion of the expansion of the Asante polity "from a core in the forest country." Yet, the effect is often profound, as when Mary Douglas' work on pawnship in lower Zaire is brought edge to edge with the discussion of political transformation in the era of the Atlantic slave trade, or when Edmund Leach's opium producing Burma is brought edge to edge with Leonard Thompson's gold producing South Africa.

The second book within the book is Wolf's more direct critique of the social sciences. He asks (p. 4), "... why do we persist in turning dynamic, interconnected phenomena into static, disconnected things?" Wolf shows us how this cold and misleading view of the world works within our lives, in how we study the world, how we talk about it, and how we act upon it. He reflects on

the ways specializations, and the professionalization of new disciplines, fragmented our understanding, and created an array of ironies in which increased sophistication in analytical technique has gone hand-in-hand with a narrowed vision of process and structure in the world. Wolf returns again and again to this central, and troubling, quality of modern social scientific work. The author is, of course, not the first to raise his voice here; all this is a matter of regular discourse among humanists and social scientists. But Wolf has empowered his critique with a fresh, lively exploration of the history of the world's interconnections.

The third "book within the book" comprises Wolf's reflections upon his own life work, commentaries on the approaches of others, and recapitulations of debates in which he has been involved. These reflections are to be found here and there throughout the volume, and are particularly rich in the introduction and an afterword to the volume, but the reader will find a thirty-some-page bibliographical note the great treasure trove. On the surface, the tone of the critique is always diffident (and elegant by its economy). For example (p. 401), "I have learned much from the structuralists; at the same time, I see limitations in their approach." Or (p. 401), "I have adopted the mode of production concept as a way of thinking about relationships, not as God's truth." Or (p. 418), "While I am persuaded by Marx's argument that the process of capitalist accumulation entails a tendency for the rate of profit to decline, I also think that Otto Bauer . . . , Paul Sweezy . . . , and Ernest Mandel . . . are correct in arguing that particular crises may be set off by a variety of causes and may issue in a variety of responses." But it is often diffidence with a bite.

For Wolf, it is the "ebb and flow" of capitalist expansion in the world — which create "crises" — that in turn create a social geography of labor market segmentation. This segmentation "... spells contradictions and conflicts for the populations they encompass" (p. 387). Here Wolf takes a different path from that of most recent contributors to the discussion of how European capital reworked the world's periphery. He wants to know how the "people without history" have themselves handled the specific contradictions and conflicts introduced by patterns of segmentation in the world labor market. He writes (p. 387), "In the rough-

and-tumble of social interaction, groups are known to exploit the ambiguities of inherited forms, to impart new evaluations or valences to them, to borrow forms more expressive of their interests, or to create wholly new forms to answer to changed circumstances." Here Wolf presses us to junk concepts of primordial and ascriptive *culture* and to work toward a new comprehension of *culture* as a "series of processes" in a "wider field of force." For historians and anthropologists who may have wondered if the clamor over the works of Samir Amin, Wallerstein, and others has not considerably devalued the particularities of the world outside Europe and North America, and who may have wondered if any world history tome is not destined to do the same, Wolf has given new heart and has, perhaps in an overly self-effacing way, moved attention back to the peoples of the world outside Europe and North America. Paradoxically, he attends little to the substantial work of the last thirty-five years done by Third World scholars on their own world. Within ten years, one hopes to see new works, of orientation similar to *Europe and the people without history*, that capture and bring forward these twentieth-century historiographic riches from Africa and Asia — which will demonstrate that it is not only upon the slate of defective Western social science that the history of the world will be rewritten. In the meantime, students of the Third World may want to read Wolf and discuss him . . . and then reread him and discuss him further.

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*Return migration and remittances: developing a Caribbean perspective.* WILLIAM F. STINNER, KLAUS DE ALBUQUERQUE, and ROY S. BRYCE-LAPORTE (eds.). Washington, D.C.: Research Institute on Immigration and Ethnic Studies, Smithsonian Institution, RIIES Occasional Papers No. 3, 1982. lxvii + 322 pp. (Paper, available gratis from RIIES)

This book is the eleventh publication of the Smithsonian



Institution's Research Institute on Immigration and Ethnic Studies (RIIES) on the subjects of the "new" and Caribbean immigrations. The topics of return migration and remittances have not often been the focus of systematic analysis and sustained discussion in the Caribbean literature (with the notable exception of the large and long-established return movement to Puerto Rico) or, for that matter, in the literatures on international and internal migration generally (Bovenkerk 1974; Gmelch 1980; and Graves and Graves 1974). This book helps fill a critical gap in the literature, in the sense that its individual articles contribute quantities of facts, from which certain generalizations are possible. The papers in this volume were drawn from three 1980 and 1982 panels of two important regional studies associations — the Caribbean Studies Association and the Latin American Studies Association. The English-speaking Caribbean and Puerto Rico are represented with more than one article in the collection; the Dominican Republic, Costa Rica and El Salvador, and Suriname with one each. The research methods used by the various authors include archival study, national sample surveys, and anthropological fieldwork. Brinsley Samaroo's essay on return migration of indentured workers to India stands by itself because it deals with return migration *out* of the region and because of its wholly historical frame of reference. Frank Bovenkerk's paper on return migration from Holland to Suriname is the only one that presents the results of a longitudinal study of individual returnees and groups of returnees.

In his "Preface," Roy S. Bryce-Laporte, Director of the RIIES, sets the tone of the collection by remarking that return migration and remittances "remind us that immigration is just one part of an equation; emigration is another" (p. xvi). In other words, these concepts draw our attention to the *entire migratory cycle*, of which they are but a part. The migratory cycle encompasses both a sending community and a receiving community, and it profoundly affects both migrants (returnees and nonreturnees) and nonmigrants. Future migration research may benefit by conceptualizing its temporal and geographical units of analysis in relation to the migratory cycle, as well as by attempting to describe the cycle's regularities and variations among different in-

dividuals and groups and its relationships with specific micro- and macrosocial variables.

A number of recurring themes are ably summarized by William F. Stinner and Klaus de Albuquerque in their "Introductory essay: the dynamics of Caribbean return." Most notably, all of the authors who discuss the migrants' motivations for return find that noneconomic motivations (family reunification, life transitions, and other psychic and social links to the home country) greatly outweigh economic motivations in the reasons returnees give for going home. "Socioeconomic maladaptation" and deportation in some cases also figure importantly among the causes for return migration. Surprisingly, given the frequent assertion that labor migrants are "target earners" (Piore 1979), achievement of a money-savings or a consumer-goods-purchasing goal is mentioned in only one paper (by Antonio Ugalde and Thomas C. Langham) as a reason (not very significant at that) for return.

Hymie Rubenstein, in his article on "Return migration to the English-speaking Caribbean," puts special emphasis on the "return ideology" prevalent among migrants abroad and the need to distinguish in analysis between the intention to return, expressed commonly by West Indian immigrants in the U.S. and Britain, and the frequency with which this intention is actualized. Sometimes the intention to return may be a case of "institutionalized nostalgia," or an attitude that serves to deflect the full psychological impact of racism and other negative aspects of life in the metropole, or a rationalization for failure. "But," Rubenstein concludes, "... as long as migrants continue *to act* as if they will eventually return to their homelands, there will be significant consequences for both the migrant and the sending society" (pp. 23-24). These may take the form of remittances and gifts, periodic visits home, continued social and sentimental involvement with the home community, a preference for marriage and affiliation with fellow islanders, the support of migration of close kin and friends, and the overseas purchase of housing and other property in the sending territory.

A sentimental attachment to the home country does not guarantee successful reintegration of the return migrant into his or her society of origin. The papers by Roberta Ann Johnson and Barry

Levine on Puerto Rico and Frank Bovenkerk on Suriname show that returnees sometimes become a "new minority" in their homelands. Bovenkerk argues that in Suriname the returnees experience all of the disadvantages of minority status but, because of the heterogeneity and fragmentation of the return migrant group, are unable to exploit any of its advantages. Finally, this set of papers suggests that caution and specificity rather than overly optimistic generalizations are called for in assessing the impact of return migrants as agents of social change in their native societies.

The same caution may be recommended for evaluating the impact of remittances on economic development in the Caribbean. All three contributions on the topic (by Hymie Rubenstein, Rosemary and Gary Brana-Shute, and Charles H. Wood) conclude that remittances generally fail to alter the structural weaknesses in the island economies (lack of jobs and opportunities for productive investment) which stimulated outmigration in the first place. Rubenstein rightly points out that "modernization and economic development are not synonyms, and cosmetic lifestyle alterations and higher per capita incomes should not be confused with structural alteration or economic rejuvenation" (p. 255). Indeed, on balance, the negative consequences of remittances may outweigh their positive consequences: increased wealth differentiation; an expanded and renewed orientation toward migration; decreased production in agriculture, fishing, and other traditional subsistence activities; and increased dependence on imported consumer goods.

"The interdisciplinary, interinstitutional, international collaboration [this volume] represents," writes Bryce-Laporte, "augers [sic] well for the kinds of insiders-outsiders dialogues and deliberations which RIIES has sought to promote in the study of international immigration and the shaping of related policies" (p. xxvii). One might add that such interchanges are vital to the development of methodological and theoretical synthesis on the Caribbean migration phenomenon and the communication of Caribbeanist perspectives on these issues, too.

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*The black woman cross-culturally*. FILOMENA CHIOMA STEADY (ed.). Cambridge MA: Schenkman, 1981. ix + 645 pp. (Cloth US\$ 29.95, Paper US\$ 12.50)

This important volume consists of a multidisciplinary collection of thirty-one articles on black women in different parts of the world. The book is important for several reasons. First, the volume appears at a time when the question of the relationship of black women to the women's movement remains unresolved. Insofar as several articles address the questions of racism and sexism, they shed light on the positions of black women themselves on both issues. Second, Steady has done a great service by gathering under one cover articles which have previously been scattered among various journals or unpublished. Third, a valuable resource has been contributed at a time when publications on African studies, and especially Afro-American studies, are becoming scarce.

The volume's primary cross-cultural, analytical contribution is found in Steady's introduction. By juxtaposing articles on the everyday roles played by black women in the family, in politics, in religious rituals, and in the economy, she highlights certain common issues. Indeed, her comprehensive overview of the book discusses several significant themes which are either latent or

explicit in the individual articles, e.g., economic exploitation and marginalization. These themes are derived not only from descriptions of the experiences of black women in particular contexts within each geographical region, but also from a comparison of the lives of black women in different regions.

The articles are grouped into four sections: the United States, Africa, South America, and the Caribbean. Africa and the United States are represented by eleven and nine articles respectively, followed by the Caribbean with seven, and South America with three. Thirteen of the papers were published for the first time in this volume, seven of them on Africa. While I would especially like to comment on each of these new studies, such commentary would necessarily be limited — partly because of considerations of space and partly because of the multidisciplinary nature of the essays. (Diverse disciplines such as psychology, history, economics, sociology, education, literature, and anthropology are represented by the book's contributors.)

It should be pointed out, however, that each article is a well documented, clearly written contribution to the scholarly literature on black women. Two random examples of these new studies are Jules-Rosette's "Women in indigenous African cults and churches" and Bilby and Steady's "Black women and survival: a Maroon case." Jules-Rosette's article is sorely needed. While much has been written on African religions, there has been too little documentation of the roles played by women in religious rituals and as religious leaders. The author explores the relationship between the establishment and maintenance of power in the context of religion and in that of larger social/political organizations in Central Africa. Bilby and Steady's work on Maroon women in Jamaica is of special importance, partly because it contributes to a subject about which there is inadequate data — the contemporary life of Jamaican Maroons. This article examines the historical and present-day symbolic significance of the folk heroine "Nanny" to Maroon military prowess and independence.

The remaining articles reprinted in this volume include both classical studies (e.g., Gonzalez' "Household and family in the Caribbean: some definitions and concepts") and more recent

material (e.g., Moses' "Female status, the family, and male dominance in a West Indian community"). The editor explains the relatively small section on South America by the paucity of available articles written in English on black women in that area. Indeed, one of the three essays included, "Images of the women of color in Brazilian literature . . ." by Nunes, was published for the first time in this volume. Lest the impression be given that all contributors to the volume are women, I should point out that five essays were written or co-authored by men.

As if the essays themselves were not enough, the book offers the added bonus of an excellent bibliography on black women cross-culturally, which was compiled by the editor herself. This list, again broken down by country, includes both literary and social scientific sources. The appearance of this volume will undoubtedly be welcomed by those interested in African and Afro-American studies, in multicultural studies, and in women's studies.

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*Afro-American folk art and crafts.* Edited by WILLIAM FERRIS. Boston: G. K. Hall and Co., 1983. 436 pp. (Cloth US\$ 39.95)

The work of William Ferris has cast a warm and unpretentious light on the folk artists of the southern United States. His receptiveness in listening to the men and women who make canes, baskets, quilts, and guitars, and his sharing with others of these artists' perceptions without intrusive analysis results, for his readers and film audiences, in a rare degree of intimacy with the people he portrays. The autobiographical sketches collected in his *Local color: a sense of place in folk art* (1983) form a sensitive presentation of the lives and attitudes of nine such artists through their own words. For me, reading these sketches evoked one of the central pleasures of fieldwork — a sense of privilege at being allowed direct access to the reflections of a range of individuals from a world unlike my own.

*Afro-American folk art and crafts* includes five chapters by Ferris — three of the sketches in *Local color*, two articles previously published in 1975 and 1980, and an important new essay arguing (among other things) for the importance of exploring folk arts through the insights of the artists who create them. These contributions are consistently thoughtful, persuasive, and interesting to read.

The remaining chapters of the volume (with one exception reprints of articles published between 1969 and 1979) are more mixed, with some presenting interesting vignettes from the artistic life of Afro-America, and others representing statements on more general theoretical issues that have tended to diminish in relevance over time. The opening essay by R. F. Thompson, for example, was at the forefront of an exciting new field when it was presented as an illustrated lecture in 1968 and in published form in 1969. In 1983 — reprinted intact except for the deletion of Thompson's reference to the fuller elaboration of its ideas in a forthcoming book — it still documents an important moment in the unfolding of ideas and approaches to the study of Afro-American art. But both substantive discoveries and new analytical approaches have enriched our understanding of Afro-American art and culture history more generally (particularly the complex issues involved in tracing African influences), and the value of this book would have been increased immeasurably if it had, at some point, devoted attention to these developments.

The most serious problem in the volume, however, is the analytical isolation of U.S. Afro-American arts from artistic traditions created by Afro-Americans elsewhere in the hemisphere, which are mentioned only rarely. For Ferris' contributions, which give primary attention to individual artists and explore the influence on them of locality (their "sense of place"), this geographical focus poses no major handicap. But any discussion that touches on African influence in the New World needs, it seems to me, to make more than token reference to Afro-Caribbean traditions, and to reflect the theoretical perspectives that have been developed for the understanding of Afro-American culture history throughout the hemisphere. Had this collection given more consideration to the literature on Afro-Americans in the Caribbean and South

America, its special focus on Afro-Americans in the United States would in no way have been compromised, and its conclusions would have been strengthened by a much firmer empirical base.

In addition to its substantive chapters, *Afro-American folk art and crafts* includes a photographic essay entitled "Folkroots," one bibliography on folklore and art history, another on black artisans and craftsmen (colonial era through 1900), and a filmography on Afro-American (read: Afro-U.S.) material culture.

Because of the variety of languages, cultural traditions, and historical experiences within Afro-American societies, scholarship on Afro-American arts will always follow the pattern of a patchwork quilt — joining bits and pieces from diverse origins into a complex whole. To date, the quilters seem to have been somewhat more successful than the scholars in creating a coherent unity without sacrificing the beauty and distinctiveness of the individual fabrics.

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*The man-of-words in the West Indies: performance and the emergence of creole culture in the West Indies.* ROGER D. ABRAHAMS. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, Johns Hopkins Studies in Atlantic History and Culture, 1983. xxxi + 200 pp. (Cloth US\$ 24.50, Paper US\$ 12.95)

The cultural focus of West Indian life is observable in the speech resources available to "men-of words." This theme unifies an impressive collection of previously published essays by the foremost student of expressive culture ever to work in the West Indies. Roger Abrahams draws on his extensive fieldwork experience in English-speaking Nevis, St. Kitts, Tobago, and (most importantly) St. Vincent. The resulting collection of papers explores the full range of speaking competencies of the "man-of-words," Abrahams' term for the performer at the center of the Afro-American aesthetic.



By publishing these eleven essays together, Abrahams documents the development of the West Indian phase of his career. He arrived in Nevis in the 1960s as a comparative folklorist armed with questions about Afro-American culture derived from his prior research on the streets of South Philadelphia. In his newly written introduction to the volume, he describes his discovery of cultural anthropology and his introduction to the area-studies format. Although Abrahams never totally abandons his Herskovitsian quest for "African sensibilities," his essays attest to the vitality of the newly arrived performance-centered approach to folklore. His work has long been recognized as an important contribution to the ethnography of communication movement in anthropology and sociolinguistics.

According to Abrahams, West Indians command two ways of talking. In eleven slightly overlapping essays (carrying original publication dates ranging from 1970 to 1982), he develops important aspects of this insight. In so doing, he presses his ethnographic data beyond many of the limitations of the dualistic model of West Indian culture put forth by Peter J. Wilson (1969). The terms "talking sweet" and "talking broad" build upon Wilson's value conflict model ("respectability" versus "reputation") and are applicable to speech events in a variety of West Indian locations and settings.

According to Abrahams, "sweet talk" utilizes local versions of standard English as a code substitution (or relexification) for African forms of eloquence in ceremonial occasions. "African sensitivities were the starting place and . . . African values were selectively adapted to the specialized needs of Afro-Americans" (p. 54). Both speaking codes are thought to be essentially non-Western; one merely assumes the surface appearance of European culture.

Abrahams carefully describes the expressive component at the core of West Indian culture, and he indicates how it might be changing. For example, he describes Nevis in 1970 as a culture with "very little activity or feeling" (p. 10). To make his point, he contrasts the demise of the Nevisian "man-of-words" with the vitality of the Tobagan chantwell. "Distrusts and divisions" and "personal alienation" characterize many Nevisian people who

have "retreated into themselves." The consequences of this retreat are to be seen in the reduced number of tea meetings, in the lack of spontaneity and creativity in Christmas plays, and in an emphasis on individual rather than group performance.

In an article published just two years later, however, Abrahams reports with some sadness a comparable decline in interest in traditional performances in Tobago. Competitive performances are dying as young Tobagans fail to carry on the "inflated rhetoric and pungent invective" of the few remaining chantwells (p. 64). Thus, the island which served in an earlier article as the foil for an aesthetically unhinged Nevis is itself shown to be suffering a similar decline.

While Abrahams vividly documents the conflict in West Indian culture symbolized by the two codes, he declines further inquiry into the origins or the meaning of the conflict. In Chapter 8, for instance, he vividly describes — but never fully analyzes — the conflict between several "rude boys" and the chairman of a St. Vincent tea meeting. Abrahams' 1970 writing relegates such tensions to a clash between family and community-wide values (p. 34). By 1982 he avoids the issue of conflict entirely: "Problems seldom arise between these two worlds (of respectability versus 'coming on rude'), for they exist in different places and the areas where they abut are clearly delineated" (p. 162).

By viewing conflict as the result of socio-functional forces rather than as the response to historical experience, Abrahams neglects a potentially important direction for his analysis. Similarly, while he is undoubtedly correct to see African sensitivities in West Indian expressive culture, his view of the pursuit of respectability as strictly a case of code substitution misses an important colonial component of West Indian expressive culture. Abrahams' analysis would be all the more powerful if it effectively tied observations of lower-class West Indian self-denigration (so clearly articulated in his Chapter Five on St. Vincent) to the value complex at the heart of his studies.

This consideration notwithstanding (removed as it is from the author's primary goals of folkloric and sociolinguistic study) the book provides valuable insight into the two distinct codes that in combination articulate West Indian culture. Abrahams marshalls

convincing evidence that the essentials of his Manichean analysis are absolutely correct. The sweet, sensible talker uses the local version of standard English in structured meetings, while the broad "man-of-words" employs the stylized creole associated with cross-roads behavior in reputation-seeking discourse. Both speakers perform at the heart of a West Indian lifestyle that is as deeply divided culturally and socially as it is deeply committed to expressive excellence. It is much to the credit of this superb volume that it captures the totality of the West Indian repertoire, and that it explores fully the situational and contextual background in which this culture emerges through performance.

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*Perspectives on Pentecostalism: case studies from the Caribbean and Latin America.* STEPHEN D. GLAZIER (ed.). Washington D.C.: University Press of America, 1980. viii + 197 pp. (Cloth US\$ 20.00, Paper US\$ 10.50)

This small volume attests to the growth and significance of Pentecostalism in the region, as exemplified by seven instances: Haiti (F. J. Conway), Jamaica (W. Wedenoja), Puerto Rico (A. L. LaRuffa), Trinidad (S. D. Glazier), Colombia (C. B. Flora), Belize (D. Birdwell-Pheasant), and Brazil (two papers: J. C. Hoffnagel, and G. N. Howe). T. J. Chordas discusses the special case of Catholic Pentecostalism or Catholic Charismatic Renewal, a U.S. based movement, oriented toward an emergent middle class.

In her introduction, L. Margolies sets the stage by referring to Pentecostalism as "a momentous movement whose implications

for national development are first being explored" (p. 2). And she welcomes this symposium as taking "a refreshing step" in its rejection of the equilibrium model so common in the study of religious movements. In his Conclusions, F. E. Manning seeks to draw the lesson of the seven case studies. He contrasts the Weberian model of classical Protestantism in its relation to modernization with the role played by Pentecostalism in "non-Western" societies, arguing that it does indeed wield "modernizing influences" but that it does this by becoming "an expression of the native ethos, a symbol of reputation" (p. 186).

Each of the several authors offers a special view of the multi-form phenomenon of Pentecostalism. For Haiti, F. J. Conway shows how it represents both a continuity with *vodoun*, by offering an occasion for religious trance and rituals of healing, and also "images of modernization." He notes differences in the appeal the new religion has for men and for women. Healing, in the form of exorcism, is also shown by S. D. Glazier to be important for Trinidad. Yet the churches also encourage the use of medical services. Both Bonway and Glazier point to the important role of foreign (primarily American) funding and sponsorship for Pentecostal churches in the region. And this is, indeed, one of the underlying themes of the book. Yet, by contrast, W. Wedenoja stresses the fierce independence of the non-missionary churches of Jamaica. He raises the additional issue of how "Third World Christianities . . . may promote a new form of Christendom" (p. 44). For Puerto Rico, however, A. L. LaRuffa sees Pentecostalism as not only "supportive of existing socio-economic and political conditions," but also as an "accommodating movement" that reinforces an "Americanization process" (p. 60). For Belize, too, D. Birdwell-Pheasant sees Pentecostalism as "a passive movement, fostering resignation" (p. 106). Yet because it "links people of low status into unified blocks" (p. 106), it may come to represent a powerful unit within society. Clearly, throughout the region it is primarily "low status people" who are drawn to the movement. This is the case in Colombia, where C. B. Flora reports only a moderate impact, in areas of greatest social dislocation. Brazil is the country in which Pentecostalism has had its most phenomenal growth. J. C. Hoffnagel sees its operation there as primarily that of

a conservative movement. And G. N. Howe argues that the "penetration" of Pentecostalism in Brazil is limited to people at the political/economic periphery, because they, as well as the movement, do not fit into the prevailing system of patronage.

Overall, this useful and timely publication presents interesting ethnographic examples of the diversity and unity of Third World Pentecostalism. The issues raised should stimulate a good deal of further research in this important area.

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*Rich people and rice: factional politics in rural Guyana.* MARILYN SILVERMAN. Leiden: E. J. Brill, Monographs and Theoretical Studies in Sociology and Anthropology, 1980. xii + 240 pp. (Cloth Dfl. 76.00)

In British Guiana during the closing years of the nineteenth century, scores of cane-producing estates shut down. Ravaged by strongly shifting currents in the worldwide sugar market, owners of remaining plantations consolidated their invested capital to form larger, more efficient firms and, rather than stifle independence as they had in earlier periods, sugar producers now found it in their interest to encourage unemployed and discontent laborers to settle outside the estates. The colonial government obliged the owners' wishes, in part, by sponsoring the growth of villages where formerly indentured East Indians could pursue small-scale rice-agriculture and related activities.

The political history of one of these government-sponsored villages is the fascinating subject of *Rich people and rice*. Silverman presents the history of Rajghar — the pseudonym of the village she studied — as a history of competing local factions. She focuses on her factional leaders and, over a period of nearly seventy years, she traces changes in the elite structure of the village. She identifies the shifting bases from which competing leaders recruited their supporters, the various issues over which they struggled, and the

strategies they pursued to achieve what Silverman judges to have been their ultimate goal: "absolute control over the socio-political and economic organization of the village" (p. 82).

To highlight the essential features of these processes, Silverman divides Rajghar political development into six periods. During the Initial Years (1902-27), the village was founded on the West Coast of the Berbice River, and two rice millers emerged to dominate local politics. In the second period, the Era of Familial Elitism (1927-42), the millers and their supporting relatives consolidated their hold on the village. The Period of Displacement (1942-47) followed, in which a new generation of leaders arose to challenge the millers' hegemony. From 1947 to 1952, the Period of Factional Peace, economic expansion and general prosperity stilled factional strife and gradually loosened the familial ties that had formerly bound leaders to followers. In the Era of Class Elitism (1953-67), common economic interests replaced kinship as the glue holding the factions together, and national political organizations began to intrude on the local scene. Finally, the Period of Incorporation (1967-70) marked the decisive introduction of national party politics into the local political arena.

Unfortunately for the uninitiated reader, Silverman brings to her analyses of these periods a forbidding technical vocabulary. To comprehend Rajghar politics, she requires one to differentiate for example, among the following categories: actions and transactions; nodes and diagonal and hierarchical links; the density, intensity, multiplicity and symmetry of linkages; partial and total networks; quasi-groups, factional sets, teams, cliques, and parties; oscillating and cumulative games and fights; and arenas, rules, strategies, and prizes. Silverman ultimately pursues her analysis in these abstract terms because she hopes to show "how factions alter over time" (p. 179), and thereby to contribute to the wider theory of factional networks. In the end, however, the conclusions she delivers toward these lofty goals are strikingly lame and inconsequential.

Consider, for example, one of Silverman's final pronouncements, a statement that factional politics generally vary with "the relationships between the village elite and the village mass" (p. 183-84). Such an assertion lacks substance in this study, because

Silverman does not consider, in any comparative sense, the full range of possible elite/mass relationships. Indeed, she adopts a Machiavellian posture in which she professes to be uninterested in the actions, options, or concerns of the so-called village mass. Because, she argues, "factional sets and teams are the products of competitive action by leaders, it follows that it is the leaders who should be the objects of analysis" (p. 9).

Of course, numerous works by historians and anthropologists in Guyana and elsewhere prove that one cannot so easily dismiss the political influence of ordinary folk. Chandra Jayawardena, for example, in his masterful studies of rural Guyanese life, has identified various mechanisms which operate among the common people on plantations, and which serve politically to join and divide local factions within estate communities. Some of Silverman's major theoretical premises and conclusions are thus plainly unsound. Still, Rajghar is a distinct kind of village, quite unlike the working class villages that Jayawardena studied.

In Rajghar, the decline of the sugar industry, the official sponsorship of land settlement, and the colonial support for rice agriculture all combined uniquely to encourage petty entrepreneurship and to entrench local rice millers and their families in positions of extraordinary political leverage. Silverman portrays the Rajghar community as one in which these petty dictators subsequently vied for decades to dominate and to keep silent the ordinary members of the local polity. *Rich people and rice* thus paints a detailed, historical picture of a crucial but still poorly understood element of the local political economy: an originally government-sponsored village composed largely of independent rice producers. And, despite its wider theoretical failings and its jargon-filled analysis, this picture serves to deepen significantly our understanding of the rich diversity of rural life in Guyana and in the wider Caribbean region.

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*The Years Before*. ANTHONY DE VERTEUIL. Trinidad: Inprint Caribbean, 1981. 309 pp. (Cloth US\$ 16.60)

*The Years Before* is a study of aspects of Trinidadian history between 1829 and 1833. Focusing on the years immediately before the emancipation of the slaves (1834), it tries to depict the uncertainties and difficulties experienced by the island's planters and merchants in the face of a slump in the sugar and cocoa industries and the British Government's slave policies, now leading inexorably to emancipation. A strength of the book is that the author makes considerable use of unpublished family papers belonging to French, German and Italian members of the white upper class of nineteenth-century Trinidad. Such papers are not particularly abundant in the English Caribbean, and to my knowledge de Verteuil is the only historian to use them extensively in the case of Trinidad. Especially valuable is the diary of Friedrich Urich, a young German employed in his uncle's store in Port of Spain, and the unpublished autobiography of the Italian merchant Joseph Gioannetti, written for his family in 1870. In addition, papers from several "French Creole" families have been used. De Verteuil has also turned to the more conventional sources — the correspondence between the Governors and the Colonial Office in London and the local newspapers in particular. This is in general a well-researched book.

It is weakened, however, by the organizational structure which the author chooses to use: strictly chronological, with one chapter devoted to each year between 1829 and 1833. Within each chapter, a rigidly chronological order is maintained. This structure, combined with a rather anecdotal approach to the material, produces a somewhat disconnected and incoherent narrative. In just a few pages in Chapter Two, for instance, the author swings from the schism in the local Catholic Church to the anti-slavery campaign in Britain to the situation of cocoa to the Urich and Farfan families and finally to Governor Lewis Grant's policies. De Verteuil treats several subjects, all interesting — the position of the French Creole planters, the situation of the Catholic Church and the "schism," the planters' reaction to the approach of emancipation, the administration of the planters' *bête noir*, Governor Grant. But all too often they are lost.



The strength of this book is the evocative picture it gives of the life style and world view of upper class white planters and merchants in early nineteenth-century Trinidad. Here the family documents contribute a great deal, as well as de Verteuil's effective use of the local newspapers. There is a good sense of individuals and their experiences (Urich, Farfan, Gioannetti, and others), and we come to understand the prejudices, grievances and fears of Trinidad's heterogeneous white elite (French, English, Spanish, Italian, German) on the eve of emancipation, which, of course, they dreaded as the ultimate disaster.

Ironically, the fundamental weakness of *The years before* is the author's acceptance of this world view. Nearly all his source material inevitably reflects the planter ideology, and the historian fails to distance himself from it; he takes over as his own the planters' view of the "Saints" and the anti-slavery party, their assessment of what amelioration and emancipation would mean to West Indian society, their confident prediction of Ruin every time sugar prices fell or a new Order in Council governing the treatment of slaves was issued from London. De Verteuil comments in his Preface that the modern secondary works (not cited) show overt prejudice and bias (implying that this is an anti-planter bias) and that "it is now time for the truth"; but the truth which he offers is essentially the planters' version. Although de Verteuil indicates at times that he is aware of the problems involved in using evidence from one side only, on the whole he is uncritical in his approach to his sources; and he does not show much familiarity with modern research on West Indian history, particularly on slavery, so that he accepts the myth dear to the hearts of the Trinidadian planters that slavery in Trinidad was unusually benevolent without offering any evidence for it. This is an interesting and often lively book: but there is much more to be said.

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*Historiography in the Revolution: a bibliography of Cuban scholarship, 1959-1979.* LOUIS A. PÉREZ, JR. New York: Garland Publishing, 1982. xxiv + 318 pp. (Cloth US\$ 40.00)

In the past few years those of us interested in Cuban history have been treated to a number of works by Louis A. Pérez, Jr., the most notable of which are *Army politics in Cuba, 1898-1958* and the definitive work on the Menocal administration, *Intervention, revolution, and politics in Cuba, 1913-1921*. In his numerous articles Professor Pérez has examined various aspects of the U.S. interventions in Cuba, as well as the politics of the republican era. His trademarks are a lucid writing style and extensive bibliographic work.

In *Historiography in the Revolution*, Pérez shares with us a portion of what must be an enormous file of references. Listed in this book are 3,783 works that appeared in Cuba between 1959 and 1979. All of them deal with some aspect of Cuban history prior to 1952. The purpose in this compilation is to present us with a comprehensive bibliography of Cuban historiography in the Revolution. The result is a reference work of great value.

The utility of the bibliography is enhanced by its organization: the references are placed under a detailed set of headings. Part I contains 1,253 works that deal essentially with political history. They are arranged under twelve chronological headings. Part II has nearly 1,400 works divided into thirteen subject categories, such as labor, women, peasantry, slavery, and economic conditions. Part III is devoted exclusively to biographical works, with slightly more than 1,100 entries. Ease of access to the bibliography is assured with detailed subject and author indexes.

What makes this bibliography so extensive is that, in addition to the published monographs and the articles that appear in the Cuban scholarly and university journals, a great deal of historical writing has been published in the popular press. Consequently, a sizable portion of all the entries in Pérez's compilation were published in newspapers and magazines such as *Granma*, *Bohemia*, *Juventud Rebelde*, *Verde Olivo*, and *Cuba Internacional*. This makes the bibliography even more valuable, for these popularly-published historical writings rarely find their way into indexes or bibliographies.

It is precisely the function of the mass distribution and consumption of history in revolutionary Cuba that Pérez examines in the introduction to this work. He characterizes the historiography of the republican period as "revisionist," for it was based on a nationalistic ideology that was at odds with the neocolonial underpinnings of the Plattist Republic. Consequently, says Pérez, "revisionist historians boycotted the court of the twentieth-century republic." For the revolutionary leadership that rose to power in 1959 this nationalistic historiography was an ideal ideological tool for justifying the radical transformation of the old order: "Havana dipped freely into the fund of revisionist historiography to affirm, define, and defend the Revolution." To fulfill these purposes, history has to be available to the masses, and this is why Pérez's bibliography includes literally thousands of historical pieces that have appeared in the Cuban popular media.

As with any short seminal piece, the introduction raises or implies many issues that are not answered. Perhaps the most salient of these is the alienation from the post-1959 revolutionary process of many pre-revolutionary nationalist and revisionist elements. Among historians, the best example is Herminio Portell Vilá, to my knowledge the only one of the four prominent nationalist historians listed by Pérez who is still alive. For years Portell Vilá, a relentless critic of the Havana government, has been in exile. This issue transcends historiography and can be raised more generally with respect to pre-revolutionary nationalist political movements, such as the Partido del Pueblo Cubano (Ortodoxo), a party that was backed by Portell Vilá and which at one time allegedly included the young Fidel Castro in its ranks. Most of its leaders eventually opposed the Revolution and left Cuba in the 1960s. Why? Why did many pre-revolutionary nationalists "boycott the court" of the Revolution? What was the ideological boundary that the Revolution apparently crossed, and beyond which it lost the support of some of the political and intellectual elements that helped engender it? Can these questions be answered in ideological terms at all?

This issue is related to another one Pérez does not fully explore: the selectivity of revolutionary historiography, a selectivity which is most apparent in the obliviousness towards the Ortodoxos.

Judging from Pérez's subject index, from 1959 to 1979 not one word was published in Cuba on the Ortodoxos. There have been some articles on Eduardo Chibás, the party's preeminent leader. But he is an acceptable subject: he died in 1951. Even so, works on him have not been plentiful and have tended to focus on his person and not his party. Another example of selective historiography is evident from Pérez's compilation. It appears that revolutionary historians are not at all disposed to analyzing Batista's constitutional (1940-44) term.

All these intriguing issues and questions flow from Pérez's short introduction and long bibliography. He cannot be faulted for not dealing with them within the constraints of an introductory statement. As it is, *Historiography in the Revolution* more than accomplishes its mission and stands as an essential reference work.

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*The life and poems of a Cuban slave: Juan Francisco Manzano, 1797-1854.* EDWARD J. MULLEN (ed.). Hamden CT: Shoe String Press (Archon Books), 1981. (Cloth US\$ 25.00)

This volume makes available an unusual text, long out of print: an English translation of the partial autobiography of a Cuban slave, written in the 1830s. Juan Francisco Manzano was born at the end of the eighteenth century, and his life encompassed domestic slavery and plantation labor as well as eventual flight. His narrative conveys some sense of each of these. As the editor recognizes, however, this story of Manzano's life is very much mediated by the literary milieu for which Manzano wrote after achieving his freedom in 1836 and becoming a poet. Moreover, the translation by R. R. Madden, a British abolitionist and contemporary of Manzano's, further distances the reader from Manzano himself. The document must thus be seen as both a literary and a historical artifact, and viewed with caution.

Nonetheless, Manzano's brief (27-page) narrative highlights

several features of Cuban slavery of the period, some of which may be more apparent to modern students of slavery than they were to contemporaries. There is, for example, a sharp contrast between his owner's repeated assertions of absolute power over him, and the multiple breaches in that power. Manzano, a favored page, exercised a will of his own, learned to read, and was able to make appeals to outsiders. Indeed, some of the intermittent, arbitrary, and seemingly pathological brutality of Manzano's owner may be seen as a response to her desire not only for service but also for an impossibly abject loyalty from one she had chosen as a personal servant. One reads with horror of her banishing the young Manzano to a sugar estate for beatings and other punishment when he denied a minor theft that she falsely suspected him of committing — yet at the same time one begins to see the contradictory patriarchal logic by which a master demanded both utter servility and utter candor.

The narrative also reveals a multiplicity of ties among slaves. Manzano's relationship with his parents and brothers carried on through several changes in his status. They vigilled for him when he was punished, and he fought an overseer when his mother was struck. He also lived for a time, during slavery, with his godmother and godfather. When he decided to escape his tyrannical mistress, information and support from a "free servant" enabled him to plan his flight, and the acquiescence of other slaves who witnessed it provided his only hope of safety.

As the memoir of one very unusual individual, this narrative cannot provide extensive evidence on the nature of the slave community, but it sheds indirect light on certain elements of it. Links among family members were clearly of great importance to some urban and rural slaves, though they faced continual conflicts between the ties of kinship and the prerogatives of ownership. For example, upon his mother's death Manzano discovered that she had left bills indicating debts payable to her by their mistress, along with other goods. Manzano considered this his inheritance, but the mistress would not pay the debts, and insisted that Manzano had no right to sell his mother's goods, though he had already done so. The contrast between the mother's belief that the bills would be honored, and the owner's insistence that a slave

could not alienate property without the master's consent, points up a classic conflict between accumulated customary entitlements of slaves and the ultimate legal priority of the master's will.

The editor of this book, Edward J. Mullen, has provided a biographical and bibliographical introduction, and an examination of some of the ambiguities of Madden's translation. He also includes the 35 pages of overwrought poetry by Madden that accompanied Manzano's narrative in the original English edition. These poems by Madden are of less interest for their portrait of Cuba than for their reflection of the British abolitionist imagination. A glossary, appendices of varying usefulness, and several of Manzano's poems complete the volume. But for most readers, the core will be the slave narrative. Its brevity and the relatively privileged status of its author as a domestic slave mean that it gives at best an incomplete view of Cuban slave society. For the experiences of lifelong sugar workers one must turn to observers' reports and archival evidence. Nonetheless, the narration of the life of Juan Francisco Manzano strikingly reflects aspects of Cuban slavery's peculiar combination of flexibility and brutality.

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*La esclavitud del Negro en Santo Domingo (1492-1844)*. CARLOS ESTEBAN DEIVE. Santo Domingo: Museo del Hombre Dominicano, Investigaciones Antropológicas no. 14, 1980. xvii + 806 pp. (2 vols) (Paper US\$ 25.00)

Juan Antonio Saco was the instigator. In his *Historia de la esclavitud de la raza Africana en el nuevo mundo* (1879), he attempted nothing less than the presentation of the complete history of African slavery in Spanish America to 1810. It was a remarkable effort for its time, but Saco consulted few archival sources outside of Cuba. Historical investigation and the means of conducting it have changed significantly since Saco did his work.

Nevertheless, the idea of writing the complete history of slavery, at least in one country, appears to have inspired other writers. In particular, Gilberto Freyre's *Casa Grande e Senzala* and *Sobrados e Mocambos* represent an ambitious attempt to narrate the history of slavery in Brazil from its beginning until its abolition. Most students of slavery would probably agree that while Freyre's effort was praiseworthy, his reach greatly exceeded his grasp. Moreover, Freyre completed these works in the 1930s; today, there are economic constraints. Gone are the days when publishers would cheerfully bankroll multi-volumed epics on slavery in Latin America. Brevity has become a sign of sanity.

Dr. Carlos Deive is fortunate. First of all, he managed to persuade the chiefs of the *Museo del Hombre Dominicano* to finance his efforts, which represent a partial return to the Saco tradition. The author has attempted nothing less than a complete and comprehensive history of slave society in Santo Domingo over a period of three and one-half centuries. These volumes could easily have been subtitled: "All you wanted to know about slavery in Santo Domingo — and then some." His knowledge of slavery in Santo Domingo is encyclopedic, his research is exhaustive, and although the narrative occasionally drags, Deive has done it: nobody else will probably write a history of slavery in Santo Domingo for the next twenty years.

But in these two volumes, Deive has rather slyly accomplished another goal. Between 1530 and 1790, Santo Domingo was the Spanish Indies equivalent of Hicksville, U.S.A. Most of the African slaves imported into Spanish America went elsewhere, and the colony itself was overshadowed by the likes of the Vice-Royalties of New Spain, Peru and New Granada. Implied in Deive's work is the message that between 1500 and 1530, Santo Domingo was important because it became the crucible in which Spain shaped and evolved the slave policies and practices that Spanish administrators would apply elsewhere in the Americas. In other words, the number of slaves shipped to Santo Domingo was relatively small when compared to the numbers sent to Peru or Venezuela, but in every slave code or regimen applied in Spanish America, there was a little bit of the Santo Domingo experience. In carefully establishing the veracity of this tenet,

Deive also demonstrates why the study of slavery in Santo Domingo is important for all students of the peculiar institution. Let me repeat: he does a good job in making his point.

Alas, while this work has great strengths, it also has serious weaknesses. For example, the relationship between the African slave and the Catholic Church is scrutinized, and examined quite closely. We are told a good deal about the various *cofradías*, and that's good. But what about the various African religious practices and syncretic belief systems which most certainly evolved? Since Deive also wrote *Vodú y Magia en Santo Domingo*, he is obviously well versed in these matters. Nevertheless, there is precious little about them in *La esclavitud*. And since the other book may not be available to a wider audience, it seems a shame that a discussion of African folk religion as it developed in Santo Domingo gets only a perfunctory consideration in these pages.

More irksome however, is Deive's failure to treat black and mulatto social relationships prior to the Haitian revolt of 1791. A careful observer, Deive closely documents the struggle of freed persons to obtain for themselves the rights and privileges held only by whites. But examples he relates conclusively demonstrate that the occasional victors in these social struggles were almost always mulattoes. But what does this tell us about relationships between blacks and mulattoes? Would it be a general practice for a mulatto woman to conclude: "It is better for me to be a whiteman's doxy rather than a blackman's wife"? If this was the situation, then there was bound to be serious friction between black and mulatto slaves as well as black and mulatto freedmen. And would not such animosity indirectly aid the Spanish Crown in maintaining control in Santo Domingo? Perhaps my speculations are totally off-base, but given the fact that color prejudice among the oppressed was a serious social issue in places like Brazil and Venezuela — and neighboring Haiti as well — it would seem that the same phenomenon would have been evident in Santo Domingo. Alas, Deive has virtually nothing to say about this question. It represents the most serious shortcoming to be found in these pages.

Finally, the sheer size of this work poses a problem. The actual study of slavery in Santo Domingo is completed in three parts, or more specifically, by page 623. The next 150 pages consist of three



essays dealing with slavery in Africa, the slave trade, the origins of slavery in the Old World, and the colonial ideology in regard to African slavery. Many of the views expressed in said essays were previously expressed in other parts of the two volumes, and the bottom line is that they contribute little to the furthering of our understanding of slave society in Santo Domingo. A scrupulous editor might have persuaded Dr. Deive to either jettison the three essays, or publish them under separate cover.

In summary, Carlos Deive has succeeded in writing the definitive history of slavery and slave society in Santo Domingo. There are problems of course, but they do not seriously mar the overall quality of the work. Thus, the author should not be too perturbed if I suggest to prospective readers that they read Part IV (pp. 623-776) only if they feel extraordinarily motivated.

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*Politieke mobilisatie en integratie van de Javanen in Suriname.* F. E. R. DERVELD. Groningen: Bouma's Boekhuis, 1981. (Paper n.p.)

As a whole, this is a useful work, for it enriches our understanding of the processes of political mobilization in ethnically plural societies, particularly in Suriname. It lacks, however, a unified, well developed conceptualization. The author follows van Doorn in defining certain concepts such as mobilization, without having worked out either a well defined theoretical framework or an explicit research model. Finally, the book suffers, in my view, from an insufficiently critical use of the theoretical terminology for this field.

The adoption of van Doorn's definition of "mobilization" (p. 27) poses real questions about the need for a clearer definition of "social unit" (*sociale eenheid*). Certainly any discussion of mobilization in Suriname should be embedded in a consideration of the internal inconsistencies of values and goals within the "social

unit." For this reason, it might be better to speak of "pseudo-social units."

What are the theoretical/analytical consequences of Derveld's framework? Derveld himself points out that in Suriname the goal of political mobilization is "to gain power" (*het verkrijgen van macht*, p. 28). It seems possible that in this case he confused means and goals on different levels. But it is precisely because development concepts remain undefined that the adoption from van Doorn of such notions as "social mobilization" is confusing. Derveld (1981: 24) indicates the existence of a multi-referential framework in which any of a number of conflicting value systems may be used by people, depending on the situation. Because this multi-referential framework can be considered to be characteristic and to have a strong impact on both "intrinsic" and "extrinsic" integration of the group, the mobilization process as a social phenomenon in ethnically plural societies became more complicated to analyze. The use of these terms without sufficient adaptation for this specific case tends to weaken the study.

Given Derveld's special attention to political integration (pp. 28-29), the reader expects an exploration of van Zuthem's (1961: 13-19) concept of "integration," which would have been particularly interesting for the elucidation of the consistency of norms and values in relation to goals. Derveld argues that the emergence of a system of patronage (with "spoils" [*regelen*]) in 1958, and the 1967 change in the coalition policies of major parties, which became more interested in alliances with minor parties are as important as ethnic politics (*etnische verzuiling*) for an understanding of politics in Suriname. It is too bad that the author did not work out this analytical model in more depth. In fact, the three variables he introduces tend to interfere with each other. The question is how much the developments between 1967 and 1980 can be considered as a function of emancipatory processes that began at different times for different ethnic groups. A direct consequence of this process is sometimes a splitting off of new political parties. The SRI, HPP and PNR might be considered to have resulted from this process. If this is true, the formation of coalitions (*coalitie blokvorming*) after 1967 is, in itself, an indication of ongoing emancipatory processes of ethnic groups in relation to each other.

Because Derveld raises questions about the extent to which the processes of mobilization lead to an increasing integration of the Javanese in the Suriname society (p. 15), I can imagine that the model used until 1980 — the formation of cabinets supported by a majority in the House of Parliament (the so-called majority principle) — can be considered as one of the most important bottlenecks for the rise of the integration processes (in this context, perhaps better termed emancipatory processes) in the Suriname society. From Derveld's study we can learn how the participation of Javanese leaders in the political decisionmaking was impeded by a deliberate exclusion of minorities. Consideration of the advantages and disadvantages of various models in democratic regimes would in my opinion have served a more direct societal interest. Does not a study such as this one on the political mobilization of Surinamese Javanese illustrate perfectly the decay of such a system when a democratic political culture is not sufficiently developed? The publicly announced motives that served to justify the takeover in 1980 (corruption, ethnic politics, and patronage) are recognized and emphasized by Derveld. He also observes (in a footnote) that informants reported to him "that in essence nothing was changed in the system. The only difference was that power was now in the hands of persons who never would have held it through ballot-box results" (p. 58, note 19). Furthermore, he states (p. 58, note 21) that "the leaders of small parties such as PALU, Volkspartij, DVF, and others never could have mobilized sufficient supporters to obtain a seat [in the House of Parliament]." Some reflection on the social/political position of the parties that now control the political processes, as well as the attitude of the people — especially the Javanese — could have served a more direct national interest, which Derveld himself emphasized and considered as important (p. 16).

The failure of the parties to present an explicit ideological framework, as well as the clustering around political personalities who speak to the masses (p. 54) is characteristic of politics in this small-scale society. It might be relevant to consider the extent to which a clear Marxist-Leninist conception can be considered a sufficient prerequisite for successful implementation of structural reforms by means of undemocratic methods. Comparative re-

search on the existence of significant differences in the nature and goals of leadership as well as evidence of the spoil system "rules" as a structural characteristic of Suriname politics (especially the political patronage) is needed to improve our insight in political processes of integration and mobilization before and after 1980. The preconditions for political participation in order to start with processes of integration are absent. A distinction between so-called "autonomous political participation" and "vertically mobilized participation" (conceptions developed in Nelson 1981: 169) might be helpful as "measurements" in the studies on problems of processes of integration in the framework of the emancipation of ethnic groups in the country.

If it is true that the emergence of political mobilization in socially and economically weaker strata is connected with movements within layers with which the less privileged associate themselves, then an interesting indication for future developments might be the functioning of such secondary groups as labor federations, organizations of peasants, women's organizations, and religious organizations and the attitudes of their spokesmen and leaders.

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*Geldanalyse en centrale bankpolitiek in Suriname.* ANTHONY RICHARD CARAM. 's-Gravenhage: Drukkerij J. H. Pasmans B.V., 1981. xii + 270 pp. (Paper n.p.)

For any economy the essence of systematic development policy lies in the optimal allocation among competing uses of the domestically available scarce resources, supplemented by the foreign capital that can be attracted. All claims on resources for consumption and investment by the private and the public sector and for exports must be matched by total supplies derived from domestic output and imports. Exports and capital imports will have to pay for imports; private saving plus private borrowing will have to finance private investment; taxes, borrowing, and deficit finance will have to cover the total public expenditure planned.

The fundamental objective of development policy is growth in the country's domestic output. This fundamental objective is constrained by additional socially and economically desirable conditions, not to speak of political. For one, the benefits of development need to be spread equitably among all groups, regions, sectors, and occupations, however indeterminate the concept of equity may be. As a corollary, human resource use must be increased and improved. Moreover, the state of the balance of payments plays a crucial role. The disequilibrium in the balance of payments furnishes a source of savings additional to what comes forth from the domestic economy and hence allows the provision of inputs for development and permits structural change without great tensions. But it also raises the question of the desirable size of foreign borrowing and its distribution among investments, so that a net export surplus will result. A strict adherence to the balancing of the external account may stifle economic growth; but a relatively fast rate of overall growth will not necessarily relieve a chronic external deficit, which will have inflationary consequences.

This last point introduces one more fundamental condition for sustained economic growth: maintenance of some degree of monetary stability and assurance of monetary equilibrium between aggregate expenditure and aggregate income in all sectors of the economy. The two objectives are not necessarily consistent with

one another. In developing countries, development programming invariably raises especially public investment which raises effective demand without necessarily a simultaneous and equivalent increase in the supply of goods and services. Investments with long gestation periods, investments which are indirectly productive — education, health, housing, for example — will slow down the rate of growth. Also, given the world market conditions and the developing country's propensity to import, resource mobility, productive capacity, and efficiency in implementing price restraining policies, the heavy dependence on foreign trade can lead to inflationary pressures.

As is evident from its title, Caram's study addresses this last aspect of development aims: specifically, monetary policy in Suriname's economic growth; whether and to what extent monetary financing can bring about growth, and whether the country's Central Bank is capable of controlling and regulating the money supply in conformity with growth. The book is divided into eight chapters. After a general introduction in Chapter I on planning and investment and savings in Suriname, Chapter II gives an overview of the economic characteristics of the country and describes the financial institutions and their historical development. The crucial issues on money creation as an instrument of economic policy are introduced in Chapter III, specifically pp. 70 ff. which discuss the elasticity of domestic supply, the relationship between monetary expansion and the balance of payments, and the consequences of price level increases.

Although in Suriname there appears to exist on surface excess capacity in production, in reality the relative scarcity of labor (especially skilled) constrains the domestic supply. In addition, production is to a large extent geared to world markets. Consequently, an expansion in money supply does not give rise to an expansion in domestic productive capacity. Rather, the economy is extremely open and highly dependent on exports and imports. Consequently, the state of the balance of payments is a significant determinant of monetary movements. Capital imports finance the development, but also contain the danger of inducing prices to rise. An increase in the price level, in turn, does not necessarily expand supply; it affects savings negatively; it favors speculative

but discourages long term investments; and it works against an equitable distribution of incomes. The general conclusion is reached that under the circumstances monetary expansion can have an extremely limited role in encouraging growth.

Chapter IV develops the simple model that underlies the analysis. The aim is to be able to test statistically whether growth has been accompanied with monetary stability, inflation, or deflation and to determine where the causes lie. The model basically attempts to establish the quantity of money created (destroyed) by the different sectors so that inflationary and/or deflationary developments and their origin can be detected and traced. Distinction is made between domestic and external sources in the change of money balances. The former consist of the change in the domestic money supply less the change in the asset demand for money (which is equivalent to the change in the transaction demand less the balance of payments position of the non-monetary sectors). The change in the external supply of money is defined as the balance of payments position plus the change in imports generated by the change in domestic income. The total money balance then becomes the transaction demand plus the increase in import demand. The portion attributable to the public sector is determined by the share of the public sector in the domestic economy. The residual becomes the portion attributable to the private sector.

The extent to which the public, private, and external sectors have contributed to inflationary developments in Suriname is determined in Chapter V, which reaches the general conclusion that in almost every year between 1957 and 1977 the inflationary developments were due to the external sector, private and public investments having been financed mainly out of net capital imports.

Chapter VI is on the monetary aspects of the future development process and presents mathematically the conditions for monetary equilibrium between aggregate expenditure and aggregate income, constrained by the balance of payments objective that the change in imports should not exceed the change in exports plus the change in capital imports less the balance of payments position of non-monetary sectors. It also delineates the

place of monetary, exchange rate, budget, and central bank policy within this framework.

Chapter VII is dedicated to the discussion of whether the Central Bank of Suriname can in fact succeed in dealing with inflationary developments. The author does not provide an optimistic answer — rightly so when one considers that the Central Bank has been very accommodating in granting the public sector the liquidity with which to finance its increased claims. The final chapter summarizes the conclusions already reached.

The present reviewer, in her somewhat differently focused analysis of the impact of Suriname's public budget on its development (Andic & Andic 1968), had reached much the same conclusions with respect to the monetary stability implications of the development plans. The implementation of development plans injects a fairly considerable amount of purchasing power into the economy, raises national expenditure, disturbs the monetary equilibrium, and creates upward pressure on local prices. Using simple estimates of the import content of investments, the marginal tax rate, the marginal propensities to invest, to consume and to import, and assuming no lags, an attempt was made to indicate roughly the potential magnitude of the local demand pressure that could be expected from public and private net capital imports. This was especially evident in the years 1955–1956 when development expenditures more than doubled, causing sharp increases in the consumer price index due mainly to the behavior in local food prices. A similar development occurred in the 1960s, despite public policies to stabilize prices. No doubt, the increase in the domestic money supply at a rate somewhat faster than the GDP also had its impact on the price level, but the inflationary pressure originated mainly from capital imports and only to a lesser extent from the creation of money by banks. The pressure of capital imports was somewhat reduced in the beginning of the 1970s; the inflationary pressure was now sharply aggravated by the worldwide price increases triggered by OPEC, by the effective devaluation of the Suriname guilder vis-à-vis the Dutch, but not so much vis-à-vis the U.S. dollar, and by the decline in the international price of bauxite, Suriname's major export commodity.



Caram makes a very valuable contribution to development economics and the monetary consequences of development. Development plans in the LDCs hardly take account of the monetary implications of projected investments. Suriname's elaborate plans are no exception. The latest, which is the first after independence, had considered monetary stability only as part of the objective of equilibrium in the balance of payments and had adhered to the not totally correct notion that investments entirely financed out of capital imports could not cause national expenditures to exceed national income, despite evidence to the contrary from the country's own past experience.

The generous Dutch grant and the U.S. aid which were relied upon in financing the investments have now ceased as a result of the conflict between the Western democracies and Suriname's new government of an opposite ideological vision. Where the development efforts now stand and what the intention of the present government is are currently unknown to the reviewer. But the economists and the administrators of this little country will find in Dr. Caram's book much analysis to guide them should they desire a stable and sustained growth in the economy. So will, for that matter, any student of development economics.

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*La cuestión del origen y de la formación del papiamento*. ORLANDO FERROL. The Hague: Smits Drukkers-Uitgevers BV, Series of the Universidad de las Antillas Neerlandesas, Departamento de Estudios del Caribe, Real Instituto de Antropología y Lingüística, No. 4, 1982. 91 pp. (Paper Dfl. 20.00)

The earliest passing attempt to explain Papiamentu was probably that of Fuchs, who believed it to be a Spanish modified by contact with Amerindian languages (1849: 7). This view was accepted uncritically by Teza (1865). Gatschet (1884: 303) also emphasized the Hispanic nature of the language, and compared it briefly to "the various negro jargons of Guyana, of the West Indies and of Louisiana, of Chinook Jargon, etc.," and in 1901 Hamelberg suggested that its origins were in an (unspecified) African language. But it was Lenz who, in 1928, put forward the idea of a Portuguese substrate for the language, and who influenced a number of later scholars such as Navarro (1951), Van Wijk (1958) and Birmingham (1970) who argued for the same notion. The pendulum began to swing back in favor of a Spanish origin again following Maduro's 1967 monograph with the works of Rona (1970), Alameida (1972), and others, who attempted to show the lack of substance inherent in the earlier arguments. Their own positions, however, as Andersen (1974: 11) has indicated, were flawed by the same factors as those they criticized.

Ferrol's book is the fourth in a series dealing with all aspects of the ABC Islands. It adds no new data to the sum of our knowledge about Papiamentu, but instead examines the arguments made by their leading proponents, and on this basis comes to the conclusion (pp. 84-85) that

In the case of Papiamentu in particular, the idea of a Portuguese protocreole to explain the existence of its (limited) Portuguese elements seems to be somewhat superfluous. These Portuguese items may be perfectly well explained by the presence of, and influence from, Sephardic Jews in the Dutch-Antillean community. Every one of the documents which we possess ... [even] the oldest, points to a Spanish base for Papiamentu.

It is significant perhaps, that despite the recent date of the appearance of Ferrol's book, few of his sources are later than Rona (1970). It is the latter scholar in particular whose hypothesis he espouses (pp. 84-85):

We subscribe to the opinion of Rona that Papiamentu did not originate in any protocreole or in the Portuguese brought up slaves from West Africa, but was born in the islands of Aruba, Curaçao and Bonaire and is based in the Spanish spoken there.

Since the appearance of Rona's unpublished monograph, a number of other works have appeared supporting the same hypothesis. Munteanu (1974) and DeBose (1975), neither of which is referred to by Ferrol, both make good cases for a Spanish origin for Papiamentu. On the other hand, the many detailed studies by de Granda, culminating in his 1978 book (very favorably reviewed by Megenney in *Language*, 1981) make a convincing case linking Papiamentu with the Portuguese creoles of West Africa. And the fact that one recent treatment of the subject refers in its title to "Papiamentu and other Portuguese-based creoles" (Martinus 1980) is clear indication that the controversy is far from settled.

Ferrol's book is attractively produced and clear in its presentation. His arguments, however, are based upon too limited a selection of what has appeared on probably the most thoroughly-documented of all creole languages — and as a result one must question the confidence with which he presents his conclusions.

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## COMMENTARY

### A REPLY FROM STEPAN

In his review of *The idea of race in science* (NWIG 57: 252-55), Frank Spencer charges me with ideological bias in my treatment of the history of racial science. This bias he links directly to what he calls my "sociological view" of the history of science, in contrast to his preferred "strictly scientific view." Though no examples of this "strictly scientific view" are proffered, I believe Spencer means to associate me with those in the history of science who view science

not as a uniquely distinctive form of knowledge but as a cultural product. Indeed, I do view science in this way, and believe that by placing natural knowledge in its "cultural context" we gain a more accurate sense of how science is made.

On the other hand, a "strictly scientific view" of science and the history of science would undoubtedly downplay the intellectual and cultural context of science and privilege instead the idea of a "nature" out there waiting to be discovered and described by the scientist. The view of science as an autonomous activity, untouched by the specific cultural context in which it arises, in itself represents an ideological or epistemological bias. Until recently this view permeated the history of science and led historians to dismiss as somehow not quite "scientific" (because "contaminated" with cultural assumptions) a great deal of the science of the past, such as racial science. The point is not whether my view of science and the history of science is more or less "ideological" than Spencer's. Rather, it is a matter of evaluating which approach allows the historian to give a more nuanced and more historically accurate account of the way in which science works in human society.

Spencer's misunderstanding of these matters probably explains what seems to me to be an almost willful misrepresentation of my book. Since space is short I will mention only one or two examples of this. Spencer remarks that I merely "note" in my first chapter that the concept of the "great chain of being" did not disappear from biology, and that I fail to use the concept as an organizing principle. This is odd because, as the very title of my first chapter, "Race and the Return of the Great Chain of Being" suggests, I in fact use the concept of the great chain to explore the deeper intellectual, social, and theological, as well as scientific, reasons why the concept of social and natural hierarchies was so persistent in scientific discussions of race. Perhaps it is because I treat the concept of hierarchy as more than merely a "scientific" concept, as one deeply entrenched in the intellectual and cultural traditions of the nineteenth century, and because I treat science as an intimate part of those traditions, that Spencer missed the extended use I make of the concept of the great chain throughout the book.

Similarly, Spencer calls it “unfortunate” that the later chapters of my book are not “devoted exclusively to a synopsis of the modern evolutionary theory and the development of current views on human variability.” He is sorry that attention is paid to the debate over eugenics, and such matters as intelligence testing and sociobiology. The ways in which the eugenics movement in Great Britain provided a vehicle for the transmission of hierarchical and typological conceptions of race, and the long, rather tortured efforts by scientists to reconceptualize the problem of race in the inter-war years, before modern populational genetics began to affect racial thought in science, perhaps seem to him to be “non-scientific” issues and therefore unworthy of the historian’s attention. From my point of view, to have left out this aspect of the story of racial science would indeed have been unfortunate as well as historically inaccurate.

Similar points could be made about Spencer’s apparent misunderstanding of the role of evolutionism in shaping the debate in anthropology about race in the decades after Darwin. (Parenthetically, his calling Prichard a “proto-evolutionist” is simply wrong). But enough has been said to show that as readers and writers of history, none of us are free from theoretical assumptions, however unconscious we may be of them.

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#### A REPLY FROM SUTTON

Anthony Maingot’s review of *Forged from the love of liberty: selected speeches of Dr. Eric Williams* (NWIG 57: 89–97) includes a number of inaccurate statements, which not only produce a highly tendentious reading of Eric Williams but also purvey a grossly misleading account of the part I played in the book’s production.

The essence of Maingot’s review is, as I understand it, that *Forged from the love of liberty* is, in some sense, “autobiographical.” If by this Maingot means that the speeches contained therein throw

light on Williams as a political figure, then I would not demur. If, however, he means (as I believe he does) that the book is "autobiographical" in the sense of being the work of Eric Williams alone, he is fundamentally mistaken. I have elsewhere described the way the book was put together (*Caribbean Contact*, April 1983), and only the main points of that statement need repeating here. These are: (1) that the idea for the book originated with me; (2) that in three meetings held with Dr. Williams at Easter 1980 the content of the book was discussed in general but not in detail; and (3) that the content and organization of the book were primarily a matter of editorial decision by myself and the publishers. It is therefore not correct to say that I "appear to have had little to do with the whole work," and it is misleading to imply that Williams "made the selections (and) decided on their order of priority." He did no such thing. I did. The choice of which speeches to include and which to omit, what to edit out and what to leave in, and how to present them was (with the exception of the Epilogue which was included on the decision of the publishers) mine alone. Williams did not interfere or intervene in any way, and he saw the book only when it was fully compiled in February 1981. I had no contact with him after Easter 1980, and the publisher's contact with him was at most intermittent and tenuous. Williams made no comments on the book other than on matters of style. A reviewer is entitled to take what he may from this, but clearly he is not entitled to conclude that *Forged from the love of liberty* is "an autobiographical look at his last years in power" and "represents a sort of political last will and testament" as if purposely and expressly constructed for this task. It was not, and it was neither my intention nor that of the publishers that it should be so.

The other major aspect of Maingot's review that I wish to contest is his "reading" of Williams, which is partisan to say the least and seems to exist for the sole purpose of advancing a hypothesis that Williams died "under circumstances pointing to suicide." The principal evidence Maingot presents for this is a psychological reconstruction of Williams' state of mind as set out in the Epilogue, this being a verbatim report of a speech delivered by Williams to the Annual Convention of the PNM some six months before his death. Try as I might, I cannot find any

indication in this speech of Williams referring to "Indian Trinidadians as if they were still an immigrant group" or singling out for specific criticism and abuse the respected figure of Archbishop Pantin. Rather, the speech implied the reverse. Nor do I (unlike Maingot) find it odd that Williams should have changed his position on a number of issues during twenty-four years of direct political engagement in the turbulent and unpredictable world of Caribbean affairs. It would have been strange if he had not done so. Nor finally, and bearing in mind Maingot's earlier reference to Butterfield ("Our politicians now know that the historians are on their track, so that they prepare for them in advance — they write with the public in mind or they leave crucial things unrecorded"), do I think it was wise for him to cite the memoirs of two former cabinet ministers and 'confidants' in support of his psychological reconstruction. After all, we are very much aware that such memoirs, unlike *Forged from the love of liberty*, are emphatically "autobiographical" (and therefore with something to hide?).

I would like to end my comments with a correction of several facts and a note of appreciation. In terms of the former, the following should be noted: the election of 1971 saw 33%, not 28%, of the electorate voting; the collection *does* contain Williams' only public reference in 1970 to appeal for outside help, namely his speech of 3rd May (pages 167–71, at page 168); the Epilogue is *not* the last thing he wrote, this distinction belonging to a speech he gave to the Twenty-fifth Anniversary Convention of the PNM, held in January 1981 (and not published in the book); and the reference to "mill-stones" properly belongs to 1976, not 1973. I wish to express my appreciation to the *New West Indian Guide* for allowing a review of *Forged from the love of liberty* to be published at length. This, I take it, is a tribute to Williams' importance both in the Caribbean and without, which still goes largely unrecorded, by design as well as by default. If in compiling this book I have done something to correct the omission, then I for one am more than content and comments that it constitutes "an invaluable aid" to understanding modern Trinidad and Tobago are but the icing on the cake.

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